Palace sets up 'war room' to monitor promises

STORY BELOW, COLUMN 1

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

FRIDAY, JULY 27, 2001 ★★ 62 PAGES 5 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 229 ₱15

It's a baby boy for Sipadan couple

JOHANNESBURG—A South African couple held hostage by the Abu Sayyaf in Jolo last year along with mostly European tourists are now the proud parents of a baby boy, a family spokesperson said Wednesday.

The first child of Callie and Monique Strydom, named Luc, was born shortly before noon on Tuesday, Callie's sister Suzette told Agence France Presse.

IT'S/ A19

Private parts, public scandal

By Donna S. Cueto

ONE called the other a liar, the other called the first a "faggot." That was before the shouting match degenerated into an

PRIVATE/ A18

SHOCKING!
PARA KAYONG
MGA BATA!

Sex, lies and blackmail

Congress backs Palace tax cut plan

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan, Rocky Nazareno and Clarissa S. Batino

THE HOUSE of Representatives and the Senate are enthusiastically supporting Malacañang's proposed income tax reforms that seek to give big tax cuts to employees and companies.

Sen. Ralph Recto said the proposed modified gross income tax system for corporate taxpayers and the new income tax schedule for individual earners would likely be the first bill that the 12th Congress would pass.

But business groups and economists cautioned the Macapagal administration against venturing into a "risky change," which they said would further bloat the budget deficit.

They said the government would initially lose revenues if it adopted the new tax system.

The proposal seeks to reduce the tax brackets for individual taxpayers from seven to five with those earning a monthly income of P75,000 and lower to be exempted from the tax.

For companies, the proposal is to reduce corporate tax from 32 percent to either 26, 21 or 20 percent.

In the House, Rep. Julio Ledesma, committee on ways and means chair, expressed confidence that the proposed measure would easily pass in the House of Representatives.

Ledesma said a technical working group that crafted the power reform bill would handle the proposed tax reform measure.

"We walked that (power reform) bill through until its passage. Now we're going to walk the tax reform bill until we see to it that it becomes law," Ledesma said.

He described the technical working group as "professional, proficient and harmonious."

Ledesma said his committee was just waiting

CONGRESS/ A7

'War room' to track Sona promises

By Juliet L. Javellana

MALACAÑANG yesterday announced it would set up a "war room" to monitor the progress of President Macapagal-Arroyo's commitment to create jobs and provide education, housing and food to the poor.

"A monitoring center will be set up in Malacañang. You might even call it a 'war room' for excitement so that we can monitor and report to the public exactly what progress is being made for each target set in her State of the Nation Address (Sona)," presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said.

Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo will head the monitoring center.

Tiglao said the administration was taking the targets seriously.

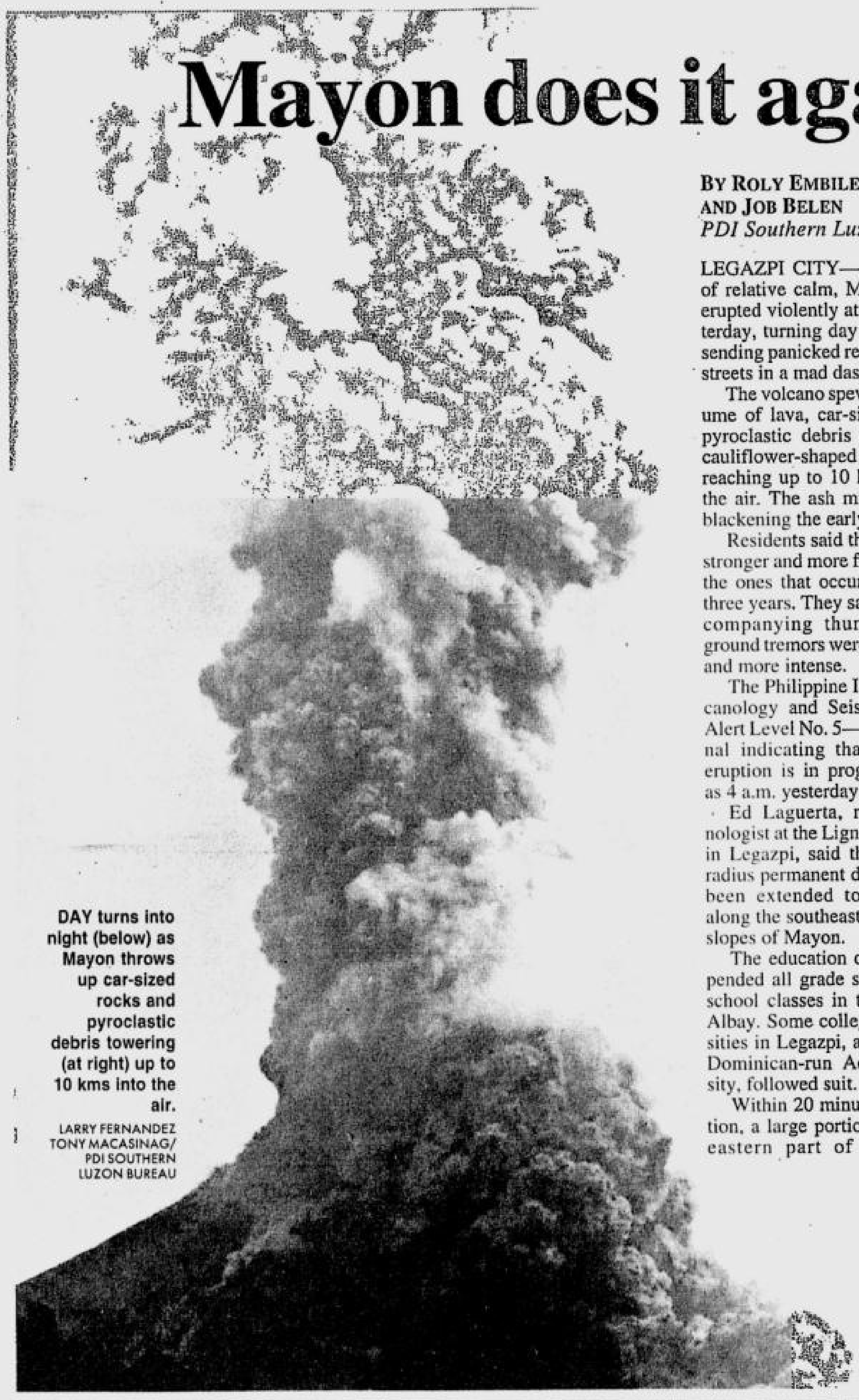
"This will be the first time an administration will be setting specific targets and will be reporting to the country every week the progress in achieving these targets," he said.

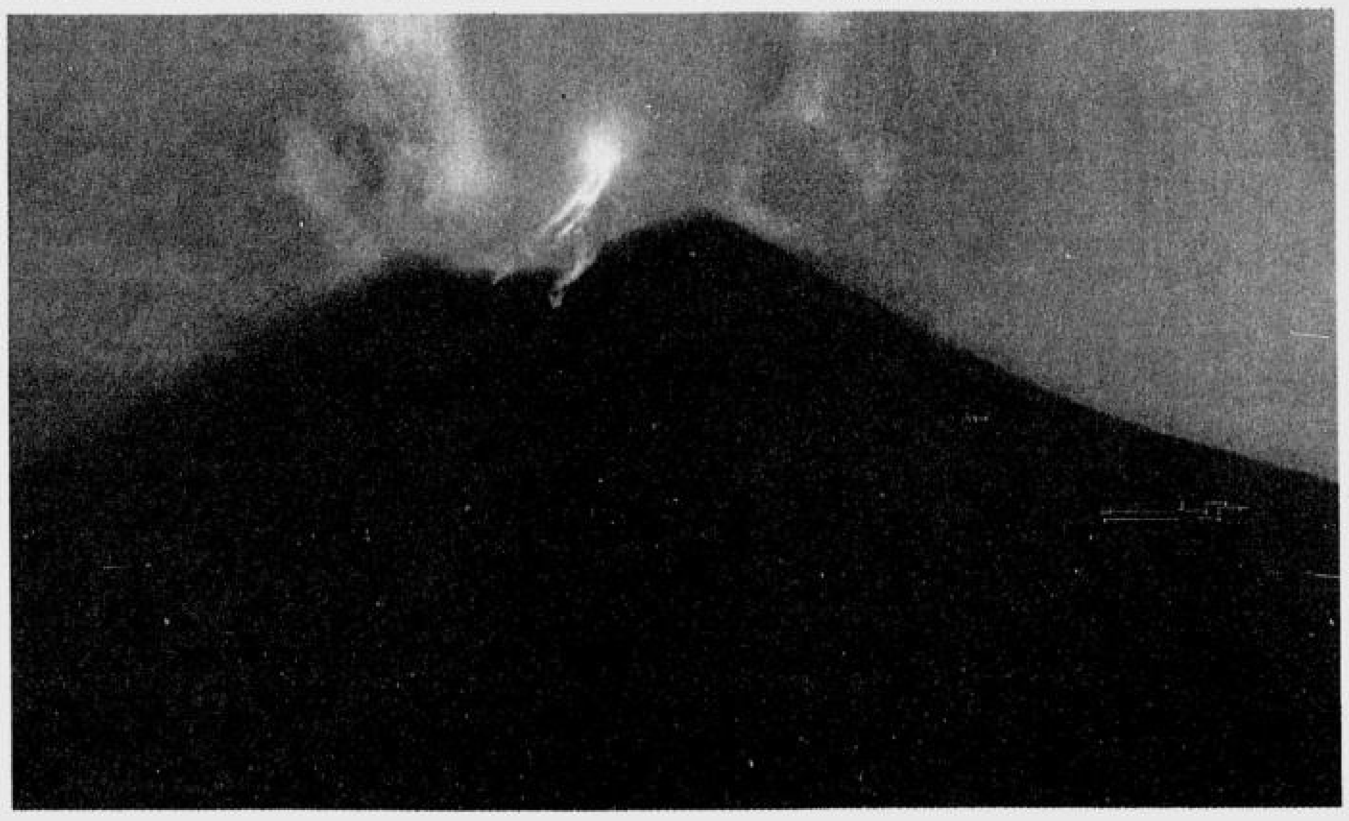
Tiglao announced the setting up of the war room after leaders of the House of Representatives created a special oversight committee to monitor whether the President was fulfilling her promises.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda said on Wednesday that House leaders had identified 35 promises made by the President when she addressed the opening of the 12th Congress last Monday.

WAR ROOM/ A18

Mayon does it again





DAY turns into night (below) as Mayon throws up car-sized rocks and pyroclastic debris towering (at right) up to 10 kms into the air.

LARRY FERNANDEZ TONY MACASINAG/ PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

By Roly Embile and Job Belen
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZPI CITY—After a month of relative calm, Mayon Volcano erupted violently at 7:56 a.m. yesterday, turning day into night and sending panicked residents into the streets in a mad dash for shelter.

The volcano spewed a huge volume of lava, car-sized rocks and pyroclastic debris that formed a cauliflower-shaped column of ash reaching up to 10 kilometers into the air. The ash mixed with rain, blackening the early morning sky.

Residents said the eruption was stronger and more frightening than the ones that occurred in the last three years. They said even the accompanying thunderclaps and ground tremors were louder, longer and more intense.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology raised Alert Level No. 5—the highest signal indicating that a hazardous eruption is in progress—as early as 4 a.m. yesterday.

Ed Laguerta, resident volcanologist at the Lignon Observatory in Legazpi, said the 6-kilometer-radius permanent danger zone had been extended to 7 kilometers along the southeastern and eastern slopes of Mayon.

The education department suspended all grade school and high school classes in the province of Albay. Some colleges and universities in Legazpi, among them the Dominican-run Aquinas University, followed suit.

Within 20 minutes of the eruption, a large portion of the southeastern part of the province

MAYON/ A18

More names in growing bribe scandal

By Martin Marfil, Michael L. Ubac and Abigail L. Ho

FIRST, the President's husband and a resigned Palace secretary accuse each other of accepting bribes. Now the plot has thickened to include a Cabinet official who says he is being blackmailed, a possible sexual harassment claim, and the mysterious specter of an Estrada crony whose name keeps cropping up.

And there is not one but two franchise bills involved. The request for reconsideration of the vetoed bills came from Congress.

But if anyone had actually tried to bribe somebody in Malacañang to convince President Macapagal-Arroyo to recall her veto on the bills granting telecommunications franchises, that person would have been wasting both his time and money, because the President cannot rescind her own veto.

With this in mind, Justice Secretary Hernando Perez yesterday said the proposal of opposition lawmakers to investigate First Gentleman Mike Arroyo for allegedly accepting a bribe in exchange for a promise that the President would rescind her veto was "not logical."

Only Congress, by a separate two-thirds vote of the Senate and the House of Representatives, can override a presidential veto, according to DOJ lawyers and legislators.

"There can be a veto override, but there can be no reconsideration," Perez emphasized.

Nevertheless, Congress itself, through then House Speaker Feliciano Belmonte, sent a "request for reconsideration" of the veto to the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office (PLLO) in Malacañang, according to its chief Gabriel Claudio.

Claudio said Belmonte verified that the request came from Congress, but told the PLLO chief not to act on it.

The former House Speaker said he had only signed the request as part of his "ministerial duties," following a request from certain congressmen, Claudio stressed.

A ranking House leader told the INQUIRER that he had never heard of such a thing as a request for the reconsideration of a veto.

And, Claudio emphasized, "this must be clarified—Belmonte never once mentioned it (the franchise bill) to me. During that time, we

SEX/ A18

Msgr. 'Soc' now a bishop

By Andrea Trinidad-Echavez

YOUNGEST auxiliary bishop of Manila, Socrates Villegas.

EDWIN BACASMAS

FOR the past 11 years, the faithful who attend Mass at the Edsa Shrine have been entranced by the homilies of the baby-faced priest. For he always related the gospel for the day to the dailiness of human life. And he spoke clearly, simply. Best of all, his sermons were brief and direct to the point. And they did not sound like sermons but a chat with friends with lots of humor thrown in.

Yesterday, Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin announced that one of the Catholic faithful's favorites, Msgr. Socrates Villegas, rector of the Edsa Shrine, had been appointed auxiliary bishop of Manila by Pope John Paul II.

Villegas becomes the fifth auxiliary bishop of Manila and the youngest among them. The four other auxiliary bishops are Bishops Teodoro Bacani, Teodoro Buhain, Jess Mercado and Tom Yalong.

Only 40, Villegas is already considered one of the most influential leaders in the Catholic Church. He's the spokesperson of Cardinal Sin. Villegas has also been the cardinal's private secretary since his ordination 15 years ago. When

MSGR 'SOC'/ A18

'I will return,' Wahid tells supporters

JAKARTA—Indonesia's ousted head of state, Abdurrahman Wahid, on Thursday vacated the palace he had been refusing to leave, ending a political standoff and clearing the way for his successor, Megawati Sukarnoputri, to move into the white-columned mansion.

About 2,000 supporters outside the palace greeted the 61-year-old deposed leader with chants of "Gus! Gus!"—his nickname.

His motorcade drove a short distance through a sea of flag-waving supporters, with guards fighting to clear a path, to a nearby park where the deposed president addressed the crowd.

"I will return . . . to struggle to uphold democracy and morality," he said to wild cheers.

Wahid headed to the airport, where he will board a plane to Singapore en route to the United States.

Wahid is expected to undergo medical treatment at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland.

The national assembly sacked Wahid on Monday after impeaching him on charges of corruption and incompetence. They elected his deputy, 54-year-old Megawati Sukarnoputri, to succeed him.

After his dismissal, Wahid initially refused to leave the palace, saying his ouster was illegal. But he relented on Wednesday, apparently recognizing that he no longer had the support of the military, the

I WILL/ A19

MABUTI NA YANG MALAYO!

ZAMBO TO CEBU

SC orders Abu trial moved

By Michael Lim Ubac

CITING security concerns, the Supreme Court yesterday ordered the arraignment and trial of 34 suspected Abu Sayyaf members led by Hector Janjalani moved from Zamboanga City to Cebu City.

The SC thus granted the petition of Zamboanga City Mayor Ma. Clara Lobregat who had sought the transfer of venue Wednesday, saying the legal proceedings would have "unnecessarily jeopardized and imperiled the generally peaceful and secure condition of the city."

Earlier, Justice Secretary Hernando Perez asked the Supreme Court to grant Lobregat's petition, agreeing that the transfer was imperative due to the security risks to Zamboanga City.

"I have indicated to the Supreme Court that the Department of Justice has no objection to the transfer of venue," Perez said.

The DOJ filed two weeks ago 11 cases ranging from kidnapping and illegal possession of firearms to drug trafficking against the 34 suspects who were arrested in different locations after President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered an intensified crackdown on the bandit group.

Janjalani, brother of current Abu Sayyaf leader Khaddafy Janjalani and its late founder, Abdurajak Janjalani, was nabbed in Metro Manila last April where he was trying to sell a video showing former American hostage Jeffrey Schilling to news organizations.

He was flown from his detention cell at Camp Crame in Quezon City to Zamboanga City last week for his arraignment, but this was postponed.

The Supreme Court then ordered that he be held in Zamboanga City so he wouldn't have to be flown back to Metro Manila.

It was then that Lobregat filed her petition.

In its two-page resolution, the SC directed the Zamboanga City Regional Trial Court to forward the case records to the Cebu City RTC.

It also directed the immediate transfer of all the accused to a military camp within Cebu.

Lobregat, in her petition, had said that aside from the security threat to her city, Zamboanga did not have the detention facilities to handle the accused.

Perez said the transfer would also be good for the witnesses who were afraid to testify in a Zamboanga City court.

"*Ang mga* witnesses *gusto nila malayu-layo* (The witnesses prefer a distant venue)," he said.

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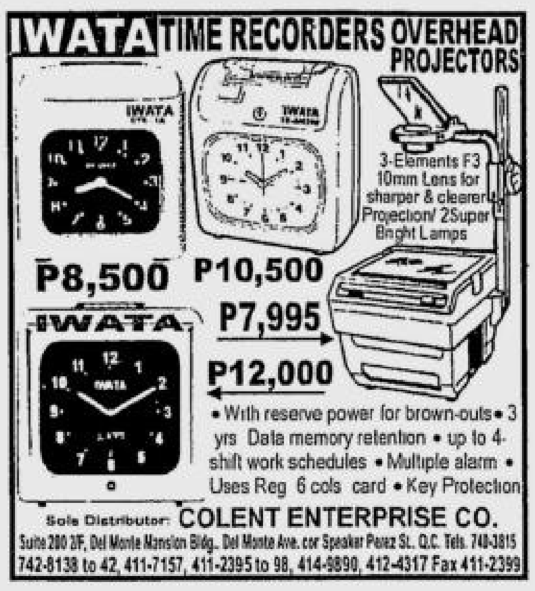
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'Human rights? We're fighting vicious people'

By Carlito Pablo

THE MILITARY has been put on the defensive from charges it has been violating the human rights of suspected Abu Sayyaf members and sympathizers.

"These people are vicious and evil. Let's put these charges in the proper context—we are fighting a war, a vicious war," said military spokesman Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan.

The military has been engaged in an intense crackdown against the Abu Sayyaf since July 13. Soldiers have saturated Basilan and Sulu, the known bases of the bandit group, as well as Tawi-Tawi and Zamboanga City in their hunt for the group.

Adan said the operation, which was sanctioned by Malacañang with guidelines issued by the Department of Justice, has so far resulted in the arrest of 97 suspected Abu Sayyaf leaders, members and supporters.

However, complaints of indiscriminate arrests and beatings of innocent civilians have dogged the operation since it was initiated as a result of the taking of 20 hostages from a Palawan resort last May 27, an ongoing crisis which entered its third month today.

Adan said that while the military does not condone human rights violations, "we cannot allow the emasculation of our soldiers with threats of human rights complaints that will make them ineffective."

Several quarters have criticized the Armed Forces for failing to quickly put an end to the crisis.

Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Jose Mabanta Jr. said, however, "the situation is not as bleak it is perceived to be."

Mabanta said that since the hostage crisis broke out, the military has initiated a total of 40 encounters with the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan and Sulu.

He said the Army-led operations resulted in the deaths of 26 Abu Sayyaf members while 74 have been captured and 22 have surrendered.

He said the military has confiscated a total of 47 firearms from the group.

On the government side, he said, 19 soldiers, policemen and civilian volunteers have been killed in action, with 72 others wounded.

In Zamboanga City on Wednesday, at least 15 suspected Abu Sayyaf members were apprehended in separate military operations in Sulu and Basilan.

Col. Francisco Gudani, deputy commander for operations at the AFP Southern Command, said 11 of those arrested were from Barangay Tinambakan in Lamitan, Basilan.

Elements of the Army's 1st Scout Ranger Battalion also confiscated eight high-powered firearms from the suspects who were identified as Mahmud Morales, Matapi Saman, Benjamal Abbani, Haisan Sangkula, Sulaiman Alian, Muhamar Akbar, Aimin Abbani, Duva Insung, Lings Onting, Hakim Siddik and Madjnar Jairi.

Terrified neighbors said they could only look on helplessly as soldiers allegedly alternately kicked and punched the 11 suspects during their arrest.

A resident who requested anonymity said most of the people were having breakfast when the soldiers arrived.

"Suddenly I heard shouting from the women and children. When I peeped out the window, I saw several soldiers, fully armed as if they were in combat," the resident said.

He said he saw "some soldiers drag the suspects—some of them were kicked or boxed, some were pushed with guns poked at them."

But the military and police denied they violated the suspects' rights during the arrests.

"That's not true, we did not violate their rights," Covarrubias said.

But Chief Supt. Simeon Dizon, police regional director for Western Mindanao, admitted they are authorized to employ necessary force, if there is resistance." ***With Jonathan F. Ma and Julie A. Inot, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

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Tabang Mindanao gets Ateneo award

THE ATENEO de Manila University conferred the Public Service Award on Tabang Mindanaw during a special academic convocation on Wednesday.

Tabang Mindanao is co-chaired by Ambassador Howard Dee of the Assisi Development Foundation Inc. and Fernando Zobel de Ayala (not Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala as reported earlier) of the Ayala Foundation Inc.

Other members are the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Metrobank Foundation Inc., CBCP Episcopal Commission on Indigenous Peoples, GMA-7 Foundation Inc., Piso for Unity, Peace and Progress Foundation Inc., AY Foundation Inc., Office of Mrs. Margie Moran-Floreindo, ABS-CBN Foundation Inc., League of Corporate Foundations, Corporate Network for Disaster Response, Bank of the Philippine Islands, BPI-Family Bank, Chinabank, Rizal Commercial and Banking Corp., and Metrobank.

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RP bans meat imports over mad cow spread

IN A MOVE to further insulate the Philippines from mad cow disease, agriculture officials announced yesterday a ban on the importation of meat and bone meal from all countries.

Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor cited a similar ban in countries, such as the United States, in spite of the absence of bovine spongiform encephalophathy, or mad cow disease.

"There is a need for the Philippine government to institute similar precautionary measures to prohibit feeding (meat and bone meal) to our local ruminant population," Montemayor said.

The Philippines imported 15,490 tons of meat and bone meal from Australia, China, New Zealand, the United States and Indonesia in January-April.

Philippine cattle and other livestock are fed mostly corn and feed wheat.

Montemayor said importing countries were warned on possible illegal trade of the meal to mask the real source during a recent consultation between the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization.

Montemayor ordered the immediate suspension of import permits and the confiscation of all shipments already in the country.

The Philippines last year banned importation of European beef although most of its supplies comes from Australia and New Zealand.

The mad cow disease is believed to cause a brain-wasting illness in humans, known as variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. The human form has killed about 80 Europeans since the mid-1990s, mostly in Britain.

In March, Montemayor declared the Philippines mad cow disease-free. *AP*

Gloria takes over agri office

By C. Balana

FOR THE SECOND time, President Macapagal-Arroyo held office at the Department of Agriculture yesterday to promote poverty alleviation projects that would help create one million jobs in three years.

The President arrived at the agriculture office at about 10 a.m. and immediately occupied the office of Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor.

She met with officials and discussed at least four issues: research and development, the Strategic Agriculture and Fisheries Development Zones (SAFDZs), irrigation programs and about the one million envisioned jobs.

The President made good her announcement during last Monday's State-of-the-Nation Address to hold office at DA to stress her poverty alleviation programs.

She vowed to return to the DA office this afternoon.

During the closed-door meeting, the President was informed by DA officials that two-thirds of the department's budget for research and development had already been released.

Director Eliseo Ponce of the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) said that of the P650 million allotted for agricultural research, about P380 million comes from the DA. Of this, two-thirds of the budget has also been released.

The President ordered BAR to coordinate with the Commission on Higher Education, Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development, International Rice Research Institute and other agricultural research institutions for a unified research program for agriculture.

Briefing reporters, Montemayor said that the President also inquired on how this could be tackled in relation to the one million jobs.

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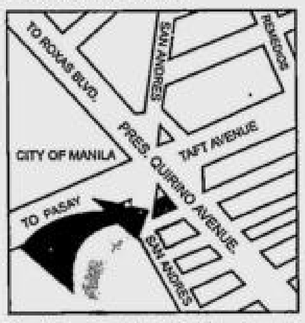

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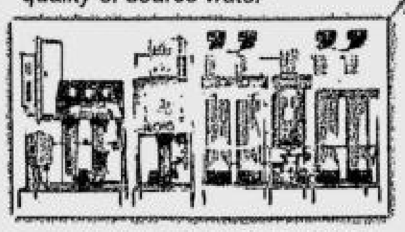

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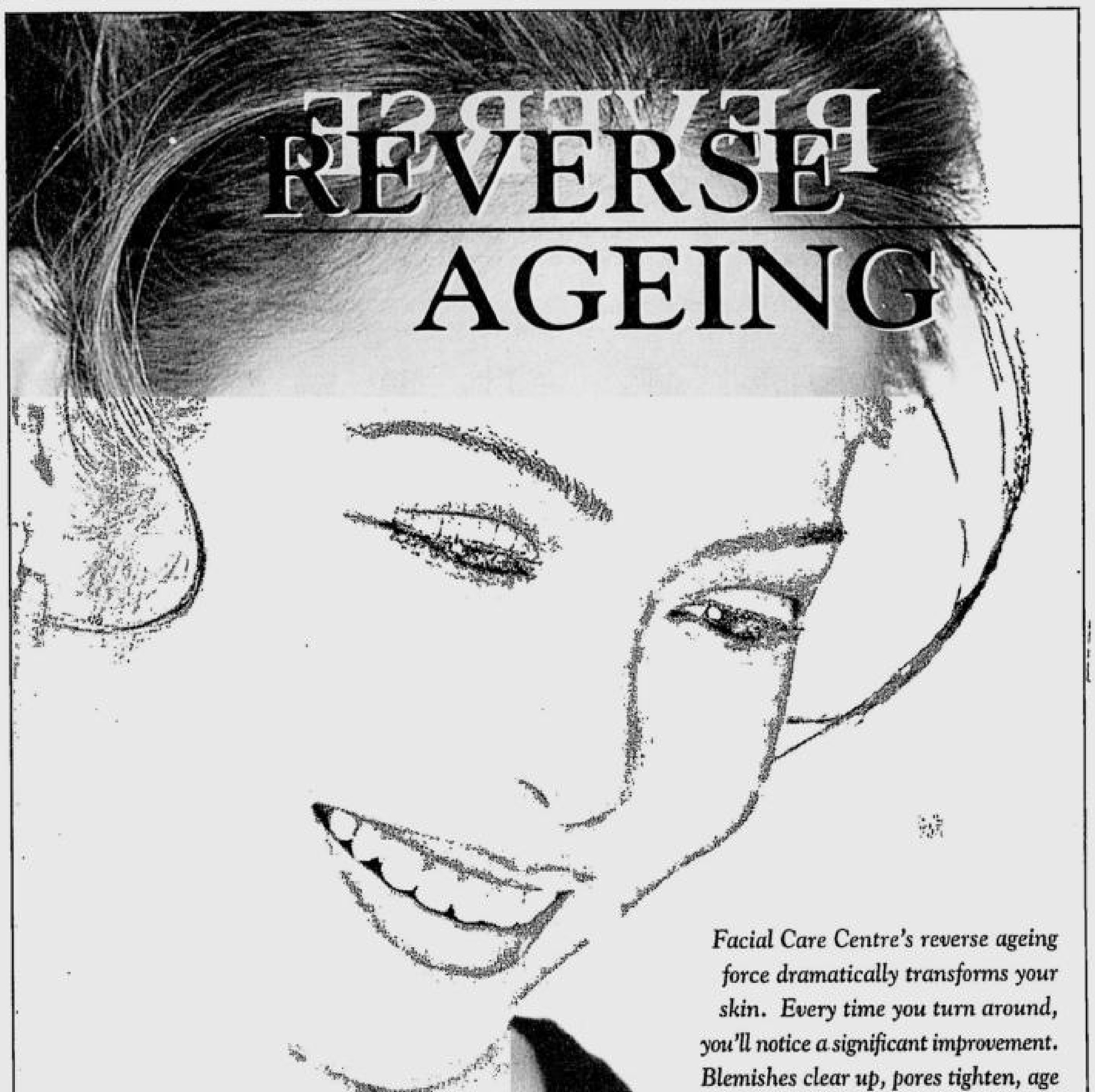

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Moderate labor seeks P77 daily wage hike

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

THE LABOR Solidarity Movement yesterday filed a petition with the National Capital Region wage board seeking a P77 increase in the minimum wage for workers in Metro Manila which currently stands at P250.

The LSM was the same group which sought a P75.50 wage hike in Metro Manila October last year. The NCR wage board then granted only an increase of P26.50 effective November 2000.

In seeking the increase, the LSM said in its six-page petition that the increase was necessary to enable workers to cope with increases in the prices of basic commodities and to adjust to the level of economic development in the NCR.

The LSM said workers need an additional P38 per day to cover the recent increase in the prices of basic commodities and expected further increase in the prices of consumer goods, and another P39 adjustment in line with the 3.3 percent growth in the gross regional product in the NCR.

The LSM said while workers were demanding a wage increase higher than P77 to bring wages closer to living wage rates, the group said a higher increase would not help the economy at this time.

The LSM is composed of the moderate Trade Union Congress of the Philippines, Labor Advisory Consultative Council and the Alliance of Progressive Labor. It is chaired by TUCP president Democrito Mendoza.

"The wage increases required to bring up wages to the level of living wages mandated by the Philippine Constitution," the LSM petition said. "We do not believe it will help the economy if this full adjustment for living wages is given at this time.

A latest study by the National Wages and Productivity Commission said workers need a living wage of P509 daily or P15,269 monthly to support a family beyond subsistence level.

But the militant Kilusang Mayo Uno labor center challenged the TUCP and other labor groups under the LSM to take their P77 wage hike demand to the streets and push for a substantial wage hike.

"Instead of seeking a crumbs from the regional wage boards, the TUCP should instead support the P125 across-the-board wage hike demand," said KMU spokesperson Sammy Malunes.

The KMU was supporting the P125 wage hike bill filed by Sen. Juan Flavier. KMU chair Crispin Beltran, an incoming party-list representative, is expected to file a counterpart bill in the House.

The group said it was not filing a petition in the wage boards, which it wanted abolished for being allegedly pro-employer.

"The wage boards have always been known to give pittance wage hikes. They've been established precisely to keep workers' wage down, and to sit on all substantial wage hike demands," Malunes said.

"The TUCP's wage hike demand, having been submitted to the notorious regional wage boards, will inevitably be cut down to size," Malunes added.

Malunes said that the LSM's wage hike demand was a concession to the Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP) and other business groups.

MESSAGE

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TOO HOT TO HANDLE

Joker: Let Nene have blue ribbon

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

SUDDENLY, the powerful Senate blue ribbon committee has become too hot to handle.

Sen. Joker Arroyo, who was expected to chair it, said he was no longer keen on taking on the post previously held by former Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. until the Senate corrects the committee's "structural problems."

In a surprise twist, Arroyo said he even urged other members of the Senate majority bloc to let Pimentel retain the post.

"To quiet speculations on the blue ribbon committee... here is the situation. Yes I have been asked to chair it; however, I have not agreed until the following structural problems are clarified and corrected," Arroyo said in a statement.

"I have urged the retention of Senator Pimentel as chair of the blue ribbon committee. Unfortunately, he is not with the majority coalition in the Senate.

"One need not be a committee chairman in the Senate to be effective. I did not have any committee chairmanship in my 9 years in the House," he went on.

Arroyo's offer to let Pimentel keep the blue ribbon committee can complicate matters for the already shaky pro-administration Senate majority.

The administration Senate bloc has the upper hand in the assignment of committee chairmanships, much to the frustration of some opposition senators who refuse to join the majority just to get a committee.

Senate President Franklin Drilon yesterday stressed that the blue ribbon committee will go to the administration bloc.

"It (committee) will be in the majority," he said in a press conference yesterday.

Since the blue ribbon committee chair should be a lawyer, the only choices from the administration bloc are Senators Arroyo, Rene Cayetano and Francis Pangilinan, while those from the opposition are Senators Pimentel and Edgardo Angara.

Angara would have bagged the post had the opposition succeeded in electing Pimentel, who has aligned himself with the pro-Estrada opposition.

It was during Pimentel's term as chair that the blue ribbon committee investigated the "juetengate" controversy against President Joseph Estrada, triggering a chain of events that led to Estrada's ouster in a popular revolt last January.

Sen. Ralph Recto who, like Arroyo, is a member of the so-called "House bloc" said he was convinced that Arroyo was interested in the blue ribbon committee.

But he said he had "no trouble" with letting Pimentel retain the blue ribbon committee.

"I have no trouble with that. If Joker doesn't want it, possibly I would support Pimentel," said Recto. "I don't see any problem even if he's with the minority because of his track record. He'll be fair."

Asked if Arroyo could just be making an excuse to "avoid" the blue ribbon committee due to the upcoming investigation of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, Recto said he believed that Arroyo's prerequisites are "all right."

"I don't think so. It doesn't make sense," he said.

Drilon and Recto said they will not stop any investigation to be conducted by the blue ribbon committee on allegations that Mike Arroyo received a P50 million bribe from a telecommunications firm owned by Estrada crony Jaime Dichaves.

According to Arroyo, the blue ribbon committee has turned into a "*tambakan* (dumpsite)" for every complaint filed with the Senate.

During the 11th Congress, he said, the blue ribbon committee received 118 referrals or an average of one referral every two session days.

Drilon denies Lopez role in Senate voting

By Armand N. Nocum

"I HAVEN'T talked to Gabby Lopez. I haven't talk to anybody from ABS-CBN. Not one of them."

The statement was made yesterday by new Senate President Franklin Drilon in answer to opposition claims that ABS-CBN chair Gabby Lopez had asked Sen. Noli de Castro to deliver the crucial 13th vote to Drilon so he could win the Senate presidency.

In separate interviews, both Drilon and De Castro denied the report, saying that Lopez never meddled in the Senate presidency race.

"He never called me to tell me to cast my vote for Drilon," De Castro said. He admitted though that "someone lower in rank than Lopez" did call him between Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning.

Drilon was forced to turn to De Castro for his vote after Sen. Robert Jaworski, who had been initially counted on to give the 13th vote to Drilon, opted to support Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

An opposition senator said it was Lopez's call that drove De Castro to lend his support to Drilon.

"This would be the first and last time that I would ask a favor from you," the source said was Lopez's supposed message to De Castro.

De Castro, who made his mark as a popular broadcaster on the ABS-CBN television network, later called Pimentel to tell him of his decision to vote for Drilon.

De Castro said, however, his decision was borne out of a desire to help bring about the "healing process" that President Macapagal-Arroyo so wants for the crises-rocked country.

He said he was optimistic his move will "ease the devastating effects of divisive developments that struck our nation at the beginning of the year."

Drilon said Lopez could not have convinced De Castro to vote for him. De Castro made the move on his own, he said.

Prosecutors lose a round vs Erap

PROSECUTORS in the corruption case against former President Joseph Estrada suffered another setback Thursday when a court told them to reinvestigate the charge that he used an illegal alias to hide alleged ill-gotten wealth.

In a resolution, the Sandiganbayan anti-graft court said a motion by the Ombudsman to amend the charge "drastically changed the scope" of the accusation.

The original charge sheet filed April 4 accused Estrada of signing "Jose Velarde" on documents with Equitable PCI Bank and other corporate entities "in order to amass ill-gotten wealth during his tenure and not wanting the public to discover his true identity as president of the Philippines."

On June 18, the ombudsman sought an amendment, stating Estrada used the alias "to conceal the ill-gotten wealth he acquired during his tenure and his true identity as the president of the Republic of the Philippines." They also said he used the alias to "willfully, unlawfully and criminally represent himself... in several transactions." *AP*

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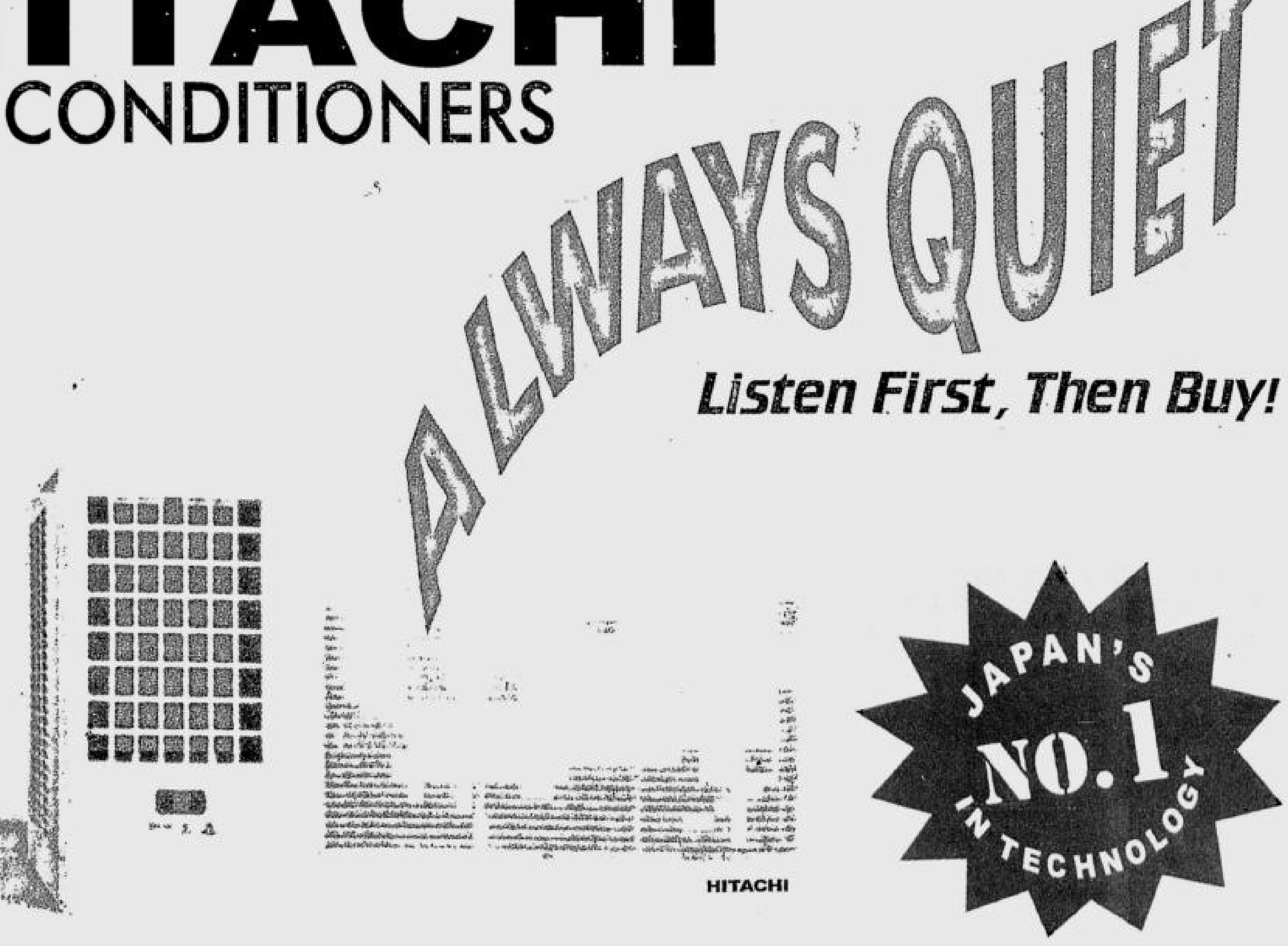

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9 party-list groups disqualified

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

AT LEAST nine major party-list groups have been initially disqualified by the Commission on Elections based on the guidelines set by the Supreme Court limiting the party-list system only to those representing the marginalized and underrepresented.

A Comelec source said the poll body had adhered strictly to the guidelines laid down by the Supreme Court that even party-list groups not named in the disqualification complaint filed by Bayan Muna were disqualified.

The Comelec en banc yesterday submitted to the high court a partial compliance report containing its recommendations on the top 24 party-list groups based on the latest canvass report.

The source, who spoke on the condition that the nine groups would not be identified, revealed that a number of those recommended for disqualification among the top 24 were winning groups which had garnered the minimum two-percent of the total votes cast to win a seat in the House.

In a June 26 ruling, the SC said only party-list participants representing marginalized or underrepresented sectors, organizations not funded or assisted by government funds and whose nominees also belong to marginalized groups, are qualified. Political parties, which also registered under the party-list system, are also disqualified unless they show proof that they represent the interests of the marginalized and underrepresented. The tribunal also stressed that religious groups are not allowed to participate in the party-list election.

10 winners

Of the 24 groups whose qualifications had been reviewed by the poll body, 10 have won based on votes garnered. These are Bayan Muna, 11.3 percent; Mamamayan Ayaw sa Droga, 9.9 percent; Association of Philippine Electric Cooperatives, 5.3 percent; Veterans Federation Party, 3.8 percent; Abag Promdi, 2.8 percent; Nationalist People's Coalition, 2.5 percent; Akbayan, 2.5 percent; Luzon Farmers Party, 2.2 percent; Lakas-NUCD, 2.1 percent; and the Citizens' Battle Against Corruption, 2.1 percent.

The source said not all of the winning groups, however, may be able to install representatives in Congress as some of them had been recommended for disqualification by the Comelec based on the guidelines set by the high tribunal.

The votes garnered by a disqualified group shall also be invalidated and deducted from the base total, thus allowing those below to move up and meet the two-percent requirement.

The others in the top 24 are Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, Buhay Hayaang Yumabong, Anak Mindanao, Alyansang Bayanihan ng mga Magsasaka, Manggagawang Bukid at Mangingisda, Cocofed, Cooperative Natcoo, National Confederation of Irrigators, Partido ng Manggagawa, Asosasyon Para sa Kaunlaran ng Industriya ng Aklat, True Marcos Loyalist, Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Association, Bigkis Pinoy, Sanlakas and Aksyon Demokratiko.

The SC on June 26 ordered the Comelec to conduct summary evidentiary hearings to determine the qualification of 154 party-list groups to resolve a disqualification complaint filed by Bayan Muna and Akbayan against 17 other party-list groups.

Respondents

The respondents are the National Federation of Sugar Planters (NFSP), Bagong Bayani, Citizens Movement for Justice Economy Empowerment and Peace (JEEP), Mamamayan Ayaw sa Droga (MAD), Sports and Health Advancement Development Foundation (SHAF), People's Reform Party, Philippine Local Autonomy Movement, Lakas-NUCD, Partido ng Masang Pilipino, Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Association (Creba), Association of Builders, Consultants and Designers (ABCD), Philippine Association of Detective and Protective Agency Operators (Padpao), Security United League on Nationwide Guards (Sulong), Citizens Drug Watch Foundation, Go! Go! Philippines, True Marcos Loyalist Association of the Philippines, and Organized Support for the Movement to Enhance the National Agenda (Osmena).

Upon receipt of the Comelec's compliance report, the SC may affirm or reject it. If it affirms the Comelec's recommendations, the SC may lift an earlier restraining order and allow the poll body to proclaim qualified groups which have met the minimum vote requirement.

The poll body also asked for a 10-day extension beyond July 30 in order to re-evaluate the 130 remaining party-list organizations, whose accreditation must still undergo the same process of summary and evidentiary hearings.

SSS workers soften protests

By Elena R. Torrijos

FINANCE Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho averted a nationwide walkout of Social Security System employees yesterday after he was able to persuade ranking SSS officials to maintain normal operations while a solution to the leadership crisis plaguing the government-controlled agency was being worked out.

SSS employees led by the 2,800-strong Alert and Concerned Employees for a Better SSS walked out of their offices across the country at noon yesterday to protest the "tyrannical" and "despotic" management style of SSS president Vitaliano Nañagas II.

Camacho met with SSS executive vice president Horace Templo to ask him to convince the union to ease up on their protest actions while a solution to the crisis was found.

Instead of staying out all afternoon, the protesting employees returned to work at around 2 p.m., after Templo talked to them.

The union reportedly decided to step up its protest with a walkout after it learned that Nañagas was supposedly planning to replace key SSS officials with executives from the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp., both of which he previously headed.

'Patronage and turf-ism'

ACESSS president Dr. Carol Basilio said SSS employees would, in the meantime, keep up their daily lunchtime protests and noise barrage against Nañagas.

During his meeting with Camacho, Templo pressed for the replacement of Nañagas, who supports government moves to privatize the state-controlled government financial institution.

To date, 2,600 rank and file employees and 186 executives out of the SSS' total manpower of 3,987 have signed a petition urging Nañagas' ouster.

On the other side of the fence, a group of senior SSS executives yesterday slammed the "culture of patronage and turf-ism" that has caused a rift in the institution, saying they support the efforts of Nañagas to implement reforms, according to an SSS press release.

In a signed manifesto circulated among the employees, the executives said the strength of the SSS lies in its work force and it should focus its energies, creativity and talents in pursuit of its mission.

"We give our full support to (Nañagas') desire and commitment to institute reforms in the SSS," the officials said. "We have every confidence in the sincerity of his intentions and his ability to lead this institution to greater heights."

2 released cons back behind bars

By Michael Lim Ubac

TWO of the three national penitentiary inmates who managed to escape using forged release papers have been re-arrested.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said yesterday convicts Carlito C. Aguilar and Erwin T. Panes "have been recovered."

The other escapee, Rogelio Enriquez, is still at large but authorities have tracked him to Mindanao where his arrest is imminent, Perez added.

Perez announced the arrests even as he ordered the National Bureau of Investigation to probe the circumstances of the three inmates' release from the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa City early this month.

Perez told reporters yesterday the "release" of Aguilar, Panes and Enriquez could just be the tip of the iceberg.

"The NBI is investigating the release of the three, and we are going to find out if other prisoners were also released using fake documents," he said.

The Bureau of Corrections said Panes and Aguilar voluntarily surrendered to their office.

Panes, who was convicted of robbery with homicide and sentenced to life, was turned in by his father who learned of his son's escape

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No Cabinet revamp; Braganza stays

By Cynthia D. Balana

AGRARIAN Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza will not be replaced—for the simple reason that there is no Cabinet revamp.

Braganza made this assertion yesterday during a press briefing as he denied being dressed down by President Macapagal-Arroyo for poor performance.

"There was no dressing down," Braganza said, referring to a newspaper report that he was scolded by the President for his poor performance in the Department of Agrarian Reform.

"The President has not told me that I would be revamped. *Pero hindi naman ako kapit-tuko*," he said, adding that all Cabinet members serve at the pleasure of the appointing officer.

Thus, if the time for him to go comes, he would not hesitate to pack up.

Besides, he said, the President already denied reports of an impending Cabinet revamp.

On reports that he padded the DAR accomplishments by raising the land distribution rate to 70,000 hectares for the last six months instead of 23,000 hectares, Braganza said it was a "typographical error."

But he insisted that the typographical error did not come from DAR inputs but from Malacañang, which prepared the speech on the issue.

Militant farmers' groups strongly reacted to the speech, which was read by the President in one of her speaking engagements. They said Braganza padded the figures.

Braganza said that even presidential spokesman Rigoberto Tiglao admitted that the typographical error came from Malacañang.

"You see, I did not pad any report and I will not pad any figures just to please the President," he pointed out.

He said that he was not in the habit of "padding" figures to get a better result because these can easily be compared with official data.

Braganza expressed confidence that he may be able to surpass the 100,000-hectare target for land distribution under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program as set by the President herself before the year ends.

He said the DAR was in fact considering the distribution of 105,000 hectares of land of agricultural lands for the current year.

China backs Asean code on Spratlys

HANOI—China Thursday reaffirmed its support for a code of conduct aimed at easing tensions in the South China Sea, a regional flash point pitting claimant nations against each other over ownership of a string of shoals and reefs.

China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations "have worked hard to settle their differences through peaceful means," Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan told the 10 Asean members at a meeting in Hanoi.

Late last year China and Vietnam signed an agreement on their disputed sea frontier in the Tonkin Gulf, Tang noted.

"Now China and Asean are engaged in consultations with a view to formulating a code of conduct in the South China Sea so as to further stabilize the situation in the area," he said.

Agreement on the code, however, has been blocked by bickering over the area it would cover with Vietnam pushing for the Paracel islands occupied by China to be included, along with the Spratly Islands.

The code would cover at least the Spratlys, a chain of rocky islands in the South China Sea claimed in whole or in part by Asean members Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam, along with non-members China and Taiwan.

Believed to sit on vast oil and natural gas deposits, the chain is seen as a potential flash point for armed conflict because all the claimants except Brunei have troops stationed in the area, which also covers strategic shipping lanes and rich fishing grounds.

The other Asean members are Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Burma (Myanmar), Singapore and Thailand.

Asean foreign ministers meeting here this week welcomed progress in the consultations between the bloc and China to develop the code of conduct.

They also "encouraged the continued exercise of self-restraint by all countries concerned and the promotion of confidence-building measures in this area," according to a joint communique. *AFP*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, July 27, 2001
16th Week in Ordinary Time
1st Reading: Ex 20:1-17
Gospel: Mt 13:18-23

Jesus said to his disciples, "Now listen to the parable of the sower.

When a person hears the message of the Kingdom but without taking it to himself, the devil comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed that fell along the footpath.

The seed that fell on rocky ground stands for the one who hears the word and accepts it at once with joy. But this fickle and has no roots. No sooner is he harassed or persecuted because of the word, than he gives up.

The seed that fell among the thistles is the one who hears the word, but then the worries of this life and the love of money choke the word, and it does not bear fruit.

As for the seed that fell on good soil it is the one who hears the word and understands it; this bears fruit and produces a hundred, or sixty, or thirty times more."

Commentary

In today's reading Jesus explains the parable of the sower to his disciples. He introduces them into a higher way of understanding reality as preparation for their mission. The word of the kingdom is like a seed that contains divine life. Everyone hears this word. Jesus gives four examples of hearing the word that range from not understanding to knowing. In the first example the word is not understood because the heart is as hard as the path. The word cannot enter. The second example is the superficial acceptance that does not last. The third example are the people with a divided heart who are unable to produce. Only the last group of people who give the word a chance to develop are able to bear abundant fruit.

Father, you have sown the word of the kingdom in our hearts. Teach us to cherish this word and to put it into practice.

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Digest by R.B. Vera

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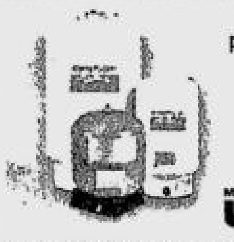

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Congress backs Palace tax cut plan

(From page A1)

for the draft from Malacañang.

"Once we receive it, it will be put at the top of the totem pole," he said. "We're going to work fast here."

Ledesma expressed confidence that they could come up with a committee report in "45 to 60 days."

Workers won't benefit

The Partido ng Manggagawa (PM) scoffed at the proposed tax reforms, saying it will benefit the corporate world but not the ordinary workers.

"The proposed tax cuts would not favor even the minimum wage earners who are supposed to benefit from it. Exempting a yearly income of P75,000 will only cover those who earn P240.385 a day, based on 26 workdays a month. Minimum wage earners in Metro Manila, who earn a gross of P250 daily will not be exempt from taxes," Renato Magtubo, PM national chair, said in a statement.

"Moreover, P75,000 as a standard for tax exemptions is too low. Since workers, especially those paid below the minimum wage, generally work overtime to augment their income, their yearly income is usually above P75,000," Magtubo said.

Under the Malacañang proposal, those earning between P75,001 and P150,000 monthly would pay a tax of 7 percent; P150,001-P350,000, 14 percent; P350,001-P650,000, 21 percent; and more than P650,000, 28 percent.

At present, those earning P10,000 and below are slapped a 5 percent tax; P10,001-P30,000, 10 percent; P30,001-P70,000, 15 percent; P70,001-P140,000, 20 percent; P140,001-P250,000, 25 percent; P250,001-P500,000, 30 percent; and more than P500,000, 32 percent.

"The administration is on the right track if it pursues tax cuts to increase the workers' take-home pay. The current system needs to be reformed because the income of a minimum wage earner in 60 workdays per year goes not to their pockets but to the state as taxes," Magtubo said.

Boost consumer spending

Recto said the proposed income tax system would boost consumer spending without causing inflation unlike previous pump-priming programs.

"The effect of lowering taxes is that people will have more money in their pockets while corporations can use whatever savings they have for investments," he said.

Recto said the government could recover from an initial lower tax collection because the scheme would "increase tax collection efficiency."

Recto estimated that the new tax scheme for corporations would increase tax collection efficiency by at least one percent, or about P30 billion in additional revenues.

He said the government could also expect additional 30,000 corporate taxpayers, which currently belong to the "underground economy."

Senate President Franklin Drilon said collecting taxes based on gross income and not on net income would do away corruption at the level of tax collectors.

Drilon said corruption in the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) was "principally due to the discretion given to tax collectors in allowing and disallowing (tax) deductions."

"I am in favor of gross income taxation because that will remove the discretion on the part of the BIR ... If you remove that discretion by going on a gross income tax system, then there is no need for negotiation," he said.

He said there was a need to lower the tax rates.

"In many countries with successful tax collection system like Hong Kong ... you collect the taxes on the basis of gross income. But not at the rates we have today.

"We allow so many deduction and we impose a very high rate on the remaining net (income). We should lower the rate and remove the allowable deduction," he said.

Budget surplus

Former Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Felipe Medalla noted that the economies that shifted to a new tax system did so when they enjoyed a budget surplus.

The government is expecting a budget deficit of P145 billion this year and a deficit of P130 billion next year.

Medalla said it would take three to five years before a shift to a modified gross tax system would lead to higher revenues for the government.

"If the government pursues a tax system that makes everybody happy, then it is the government that ends up with a loss. In the long run, however, the lower taxes will lead to better enforcement and act as an incentive to businesses," said Medalla, a professor at the UP School of Economics.

The administration has estimated that shifting to a modified gross system would initially lead to a loss of P28.71 billion in potential revenues.

Guillermo Luz, executive director of the Makati Business Club, said a government should embark on a new tax system from a position of strength.

"Generally though, the plan of lowering the tax rate and simplifying the system is good because it will improve tax collection and perhaps entice more people from the underground to come out and pay taxes," Luz said.

Miguel Varela, president of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), said the new tax would raise the burden of companies.

"Initially, I think some were of the opinion that the new tax will mean a higher burden for business," Varela said.

He said a gross income tax below 20 percent would be more acceptable.

Varela said the PCCI tax committee would come up with a position paper on gross income taxation next week.

Luz countered that the 20-21 percent corporate income tax floated by Malacañang would be welcomed by businesses. "A 26-percent tax, for instance, will bring our rates at par with Singapore," he said.

The reduction in the corporate tax, however, will be accompanied by the removal of exemptions for items like advertisement, travel, representation and training. *With a report from Delfin Mallari, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Solon warns of demoralization in BIR

By Volt Contreras

HOUSE minority leader Carlos Padilla warned that unless Malacañang addressed the "demoralization" in the Bureau of Internal Revenue the government would be frustrated in implementing its proposed tax scheme.

The Nueva Vizcaya congressman said there was a strong clamor within the BIR for the resignation of Commissioner Rene Bañez because of his questionable revamp of personnel and appointment of "outsiders" to newly created positions.

He said revenue district officers and the BIR employees union were openly assailing Bañez for initiating "an arbitrary and capricious (removal) of key officers in blatant violation of their right to security of tenure" and rights to due process under the Civil Service Code.

Bañez's detractors have come out with a 6-page position paper, a copy of which has reached Padilla.

Aside from questioning his appointment of certain people, they have also assailed him for describing the BIR as "the most corrupt agency" with insufficiently trained people.

The position paper, issued in June, also wondered why a former "tax officer and consultant of big corporations (like) PLDT, Metro Pacific group and Steniel group, among others" would end up heading BIR, in an apparent case of "conflict of interest."

The BIR chief is also under fire for naming Rommel Magno, brother of his "PR consultant" Alex Magno, as chief of the Tax, Information and Education Division, with the title assistant commissioner for corporate communications.

The position is not in the BIR plantilla.

Padilla said: "The main issue still is not a question of rate adjustments but that of tax collection efficiency. Tax collection may still be hampered because of low morale in the BIR."

"Whether you have a new system enacted, it boils down to collection. The general observation is the number of those who pay their taxes religiously has remained the same despite the introduction of new tax rates," said the LDP representative.

MARKING her second day of holding office at the agriculture department, the President is escorted by Agriculture Secretary Montemayor. JOAN BONDOC

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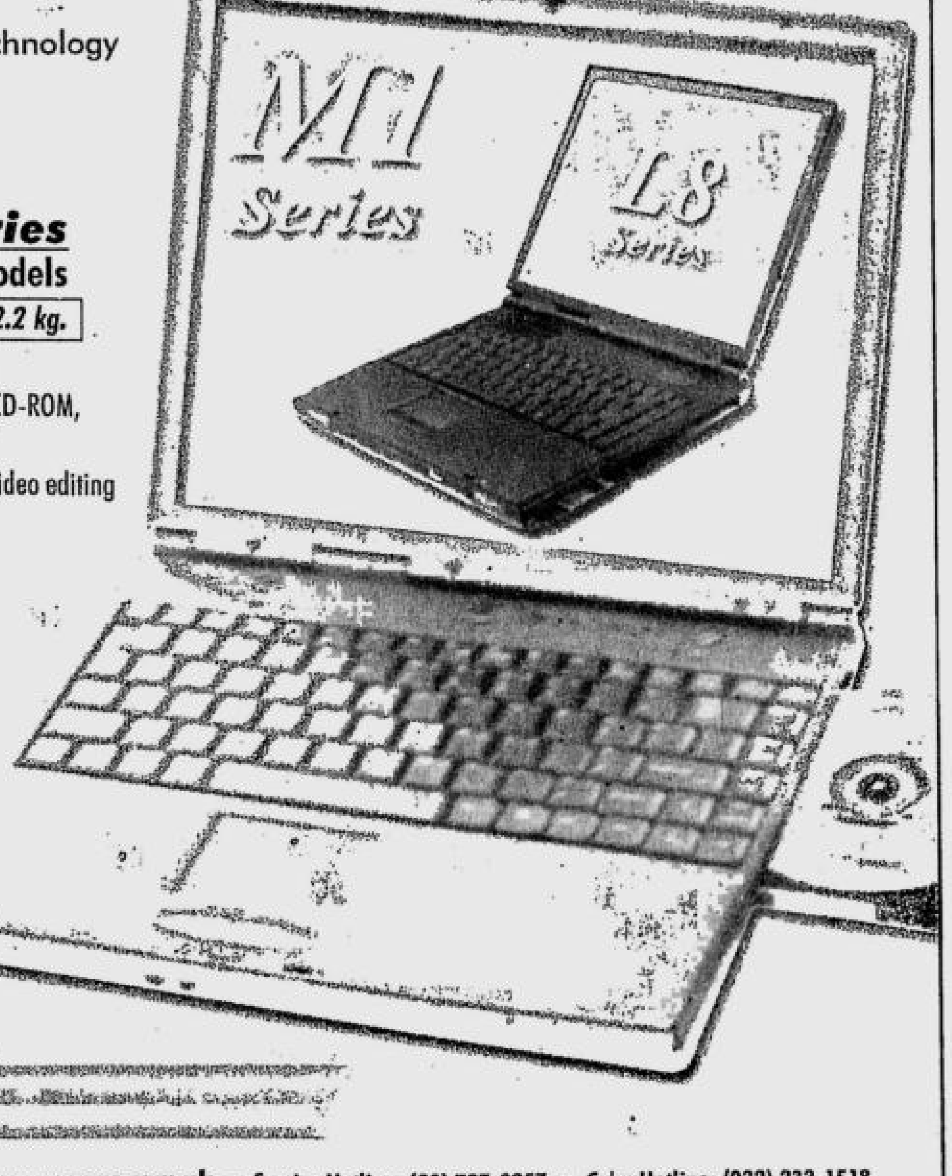

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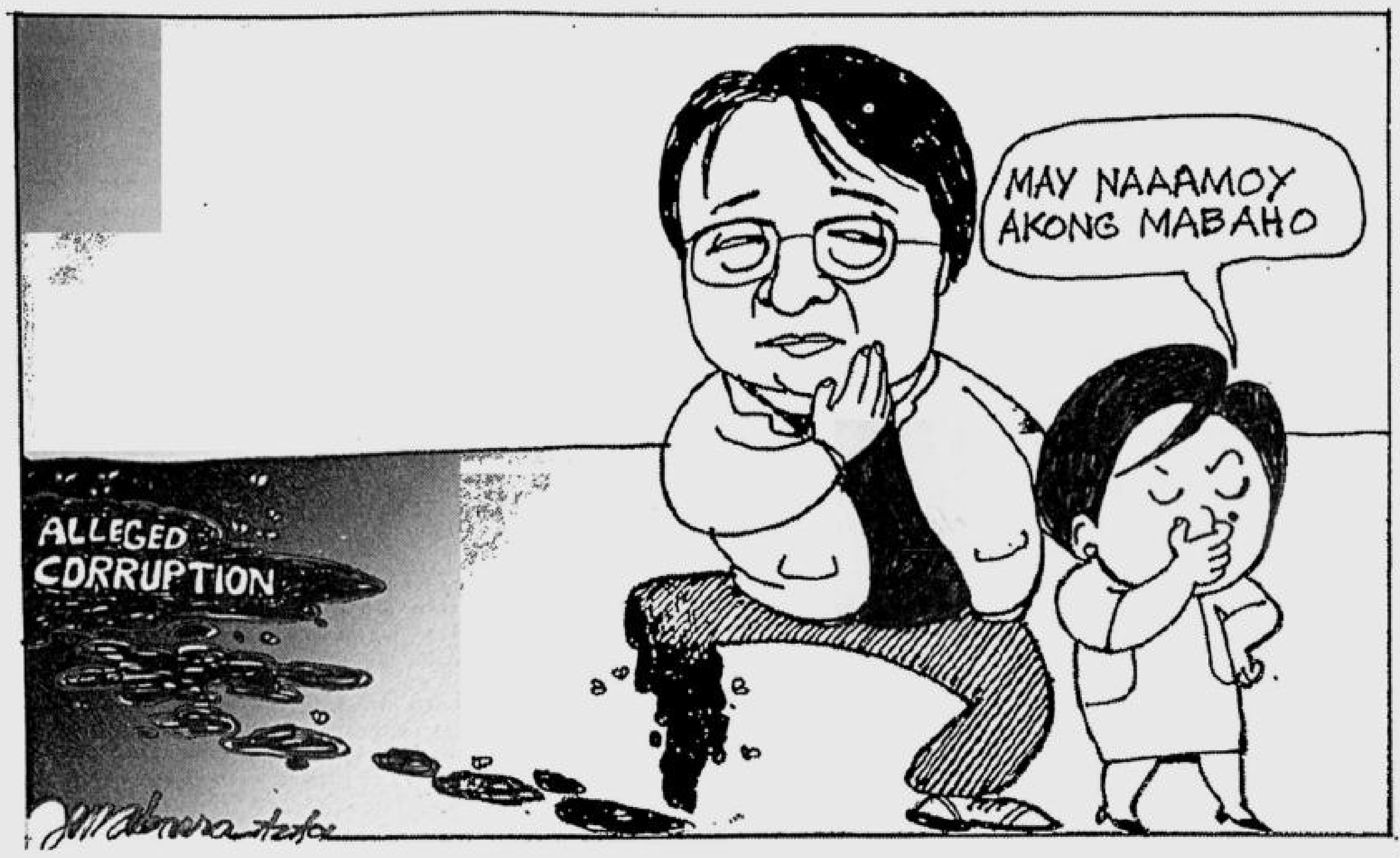


Who got the money?

EDITORIAL

IF President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo could have it her way, she would rather not talk anymore about the P50-million bribery case revolving around a telecommunications franchise she vetoed. "Everything (that needs) to be said has been said already," Ms Macapagal told reporters Tuesday night. Later in an interview with GMA-7 news anchor Mel Tiangco, Ms Macapagal expressed impatience over being asked the question again saying, "I have answered all the things I need to answer about that matter being repeated all over again."

Maybe. But there are questions that demand forthright answers from everyone who was involved in this sorry tale of corruption so early in her term, not least among them First Gentleman Mike Arroyo. And those questions are going to be asked not only by naggers in media but by members of both Houses of Congress where the opposition is calling for an official inquiry.

Ironically it was Arroyo who first went public with the Palace bribery story. Apparently trying to deflect text messages linking him to the scandal, Arroyo announced on his radio program that it was a Palace secretary, now resigned, who accepted money to work for the recall of the President's veto.

Feeling that Arroyo was alluding to her, Veronica "Bing" Rodrigo, who had resigned as the President's correspondence secretary, called up a radio station and accused Arroyo and three of his friends of accepting a bribe to have the veto recalled.

Arroyo, of course, belied Rodrigo's allegations and dismissed their very public dispute as nothing more than a "misunderstanding between friends." In his own defense, Arroyo said that as a lawyer he knew that once a bill was vetoed the matter was out of the President's hands since only Congress could override a veto. Ms Macapagal also sought to exonerate her husband by saying he never mentioned the matter to her.

Now it is Arroyo's word against Rodrigo's, and unfortunately for him, the public is inclined to believe her. And it is not because she has produced any evidence to support her accusations, it is mainly because of who she is. Rodrigo is the daughter of the late former Sen. Francisco Rodrigo who was well-known for his integrity and courage in standing up to the dictator Ferdinand Marcos. She adverted to this when she said she had to fight back and protect her family's name. Rodrigo is (was?) also a close friend of the President since grade school, making it highly unlikely that she would ruin that friendship by making false charges against her husband. And finally who would be so foolish as to make false accusations against someone so influential as the First Gentleman? Arroyo is not Joseph Estrada, but taking him on, like Rodrigo is doing, requires almost as much gumption as what Luis Singson did to the former president.

Arroyo didn't help himself when he left for the United States Tuesday night while the controversy continues to simmer. It makes him look like he is avoiding the heat or, worse, guilty.

Arroyo should cut his trip short, come home and face a curious public and possibly Congress. The controversy will not blow over because of his absence. Instead it will put all the pressure of defending him on the President.

Although she has declared that everything has been said about the issue, Ms Macapagal herself has to provide some satisfactory answers to a few questions. For instance, she said she first learned of the allegations of bribery when Ralph Evangelista told her someone who was "very close to her" had received a bribe. So why didn't she demand that he identify the culprit, as she was duty-bound to do? Why didn't the famous presidential temper erupt at the suggestion that somebody close to her had committed a serious crime? Why did she confront her husband with the allegation?

And why is one of the principal characters behind some of Estrada's moneymaking deals involved in this new scandal? It was Jaime Dichaves who served as the bagman for Estrada's commissions in the purchase of stocks in Belle Resources by the Government Service Insurance System and the Social Security System. He also tried to mislead the Senate by claiming ownership of Estrada's "Jose Velarde" accounts. How could anyone close to Ms Macapagal have even considered cutting a deal with him?

Sure, all their efforts went for naught since nobody dared to even whisper to the President about it. But it doesn't mean no crime was committed. In fact, everyone is saying that money changed hands. So who got it?

Apparently Malacañang didn't want to know. Now the opposition wants to know, and so do the Filipino people.

How about a song titled 'Bangkang Papel'?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo invited four newspaper columnists, as well as her three top media handlers, to dinner at Malacañang last Wednesday evening. Unfortunately, the most interesting parts of her revelations were off the record, so you will have to be content with her defense against negative comments on her State of the Nation Address.

First are the paper boats that, according to her speech, were floated by three young boys from Payatas down the Pasig River to Malacañang where she saw them and read the messages written on them. Critics said this must be a tall tale as no paper boat could have floated that far as it would have soaked up water and would have sunk minutes after it was launched.

No, she did not actually see the paper boats herself, admitted the President, but she did read a story about it in the INQUIRER. That's where she got the idea of opening her speech with the story of the paper boats and their messages. It was not a fabrication. It was true—at least the important part.

Apparently, a non-government organization working for the urban poor orchestrated the letter-floating contest as a gimmick to attract the attention of media and, ultimately, the President of the Philippines. It attracted the attention only of one reporter of the INQUIRER and one photographer of the Manila Standard. The story appeared only in the INQUIRER and a photo in the Standard. Luckily for Jason, Jomar and Erwin, President Macapagal reads the INQUIRER, and the rest is history.

There was a little license and exaggeration to achieve drama in the story, but it was true. It was no lie.

That's what happens when a high official of the land is not absolutely truthful and accurate in her statements. After narrating the story of Jason, Jomar and Erwin, the President could have added, "To be very truthful about it, I did not actually see the paper boats but I read about them and their messages in a newspaper" and there would have been no flak later on. Without that clarification, she gave the impression that she actually saw and retrieved the paper boats and that's what gave critics, always waiting for gaffes and holes in her utterances and actions, the excuse to carp about the implausibility of the story of the paper boats.

Now that the President has clarified it, let's leave it at that and pray that Jason, Jomar and Erwin are better choices than Mang Pandoy and live, as in fairy tales, happily ever after.

In fact, an imaginative songwriter can compose a romantic song titled "Bangkang Papel." It could be about a young swain sending love letters written on paper boats floating down the river to a well-guarded castle where his lady love is imprisoned (*parang* fairy tale, *ano po*?). Did they fall in love, marry and live happily ever after? Only the paper boats can tell.

Such a mushy song can be as popular as the hit "Kastilyong Buhangin" or "Red Sails in the Sunset."

* * *

The other criticism of her address that President Macapagal defended is that there would not be enough money to fund all the promises she made.

"I know my arithmetic," she said. "There is enough money, All those programs have funds. I made sure before I included them in my speech."

Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin, who should know the state of the government's finances better than anyone else, has backed her President. There is enough money.

Indeed, Speaker Jose de Venecia had said this before. Asked at the Kapihan sa Manila where the government would get the money to fund his Economic Action Plan 747, Sunshine Joe replied that there is enough money "if you know where to look for it." I wrote about his source of funds in an earlier column. Among them, as far as I can remember, are the US$10 billion unused commodity loans, the US$10 billion royalties from the Camago-Malampaya gas project, the US$650 million Marcos ill-gotten wealth held in escrow by the Philippine National Bank and other funds squirreled here and there.

But why is the opposition so concerned with where the money is going to come from? President Macapagal has already assured that there would be no new taxes. Where to get the money is her problem. Let her worry about that. She said there is enough money for her projects, so let her get them. If she fails, then the opposition will have more reason to carp against her. If she succeeds, then everybody benefits.

Leave the President alone in trying to fulfill her promises. Why should the opposition worry where she would get the funds? That's her problem. Let her solve it. Leave her be.

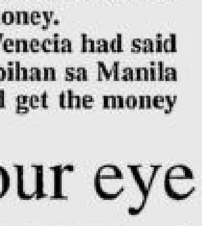
* * *

KAPIHAN NOTES: The present Commission on Elections is without doubt the slowest we have ever had. Until now, winners in the party-list elections have not been proclaimed. Caloocan City is still without an elected mayor. Many election cases are still undecided. The bidding for the modernization of the election registration was awarded in October last year but until now the Comelec is not even making any move to finalize the contract. Meanwhile, time is running out. But the modernization has to be finished before the 2004 presidential elections. Why is the Comelec so slow?

We will know on Monday when Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo and other Comelec commissioners answer questions at the Kapihan sa Manila forum. Also guests are candidates and complainants with unresolved cases, and representatives of Photokina, winner of the bidding but whose contract is being delayed.

A mote in our eye

WINDMILLS



Jerry Barican

THE UNINTENDED saving grace of the Marcos years may have been in showing that there are many things worse than a free press, a shackled one being among them. And so the press remains safe, perhaps for the couple or so of decades it will take for a new generation, without memories of that dark night, to come to political maturity.

Then the lessons will have to be learned again, painfully. "The tree of liberty," Jefferson reminds us, "has to be nourished from time to time with the blood of its patriots and martyrs. It is its natural manure." If we doubt that this is literally true, all we need to do is to count the number of those who even today die fighting for and against insurgencies.

The current press is the strange, often tasteless, and many times corruptible fruit of this wondrous tree. Whatever media's faults, however, even President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will vastly prefer the critical broadsheets of today to the underground press of yesteryears. But while in relative terms today's press looks tolerable, in absolute terms, it is a national disgrace.

The problem begins with scores of dailies, both broadsheets and tabloid, trying to carve out, understandably, a profitable niche in a limited market. This is one rare case of competition bringing out the worst—the use of too many sensational headlines, press releases by partisan interests and unbalanced stories to sell copies. Whole papers are ungrammatical and have headlines that bear little relation to the stories beneath.

Worse, people believe that in the case of some papers, one can pay one's way not only to the editorial pages but to the front page itself (the famous "envelopmental journalism"). In some cases, press releases are not even identified as such but passed off as unbiased news. There are whispered and not-so whispered claims by politicians of so-called ABC Journalism—attack, blackmail, collect—the manipulation of the slant of news stories by the occasional mediaman in order to extort money. These shady practices are by no means confined to print journalism.

Broadcasters have their share of abominable practices. If this country is going to the dogs, both politicians and elements of the press share star billing in the kennel.

This irresponsible behavior has two major effects. The first is the erosion of the credibility of the press. If corruption is unchecked, the press will look more and more hypocritical even as it waxes sanctimonious. What becomes unbelievable will soon be dismissed by the public as merely the equivalent of paid advertisements. The second effect is that on the government. A paid press promotes rather than retards corruption, and drives away the honest from the public sector. It also distorts public policy and debate.

Even when the press is honest, it may have private agendas. Very few of the newspapers are breaking even. There is the consequent belief that many publishers do not continue to publish out of any journalistic motive but purely to defend their other, profitable, commercial interests. That, however, is not necessarily wrong, provided a conscious effort is made by the paper concerned at fair and balanced reporting. In truth, the public is often aware of when self-interest motivates a particular story or editorial. Being incredulous, it is rarely misled, often discounting the slant when it reads the story.

But that is not the whole story. There is too much plain incompetence. Stories that appear and are never followed up. Editorials that masquerade as news stories, blatant with the writer's bias, a product of the "committed journalism" theory of the mass communication schools. One-sided reports. Opinions, unattributed naturally ("concerned citizens today supported the call for Y's ouster..."), propagandizing the reader. Trivia is played up while more important stories are ignored or buried in the inside pages. Outrageous libels, no matter how patently unfair, are trumpeted. The list seems endless.

Many problems have been amplified by developments in technology. A media that adopts a cynical, contemptuous tone encourages others to do the same. The lack of civility that permeates our national discourse begins with the media, is embraced by politicians, copied by interest groups, and ironically even by elements of civil society, and eventually finds its way into the recklessness of rumors and texting. Media does not only set the national agenda, it also sets the national tone.

Just like government, journalism has its share of responsible workers, indeed the majority are. There are countless publishers, journalists and columnists who take their craft seriously and are constantly trying to do better despite limited budgets and fierce competition. But even the best fall short from time to time. If no local paper today yet has the quality or reputation of the New York Times, it is not improper to remember that that paper began life as a little more than a yellow rag and improved little by little as its audience grew in sophistication. As the economy improves, no doubt so will the demands of the readers and consequently the general quality of our papers.

The more apt comparison to make with the press may not be with our government but with our society itself. And in this, the press accurately reflects the strengths and weaknesses of the Filipino. When times are difficult or bad (Edsa, Ninoy's death), the nation is magnificent. So is, in general, the working press. But when times are more normal, we aren't so hot (today's anarchy and endless disputation, the abuses of office holders). Often, neither is the press. Changing that will permanently require decades and a massive upgrading of our educational system. But that, as the press would say, is another story.

The phony battle of metaphors

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE REACTIONS to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address range from the hilarious to the pompous. The most amusing aspect is the debate triggered by the President's metaphor of the messages sent to her—via paper boats sailing on the Pasig—by three Payatas children. The debate spun thousands of words far more than those dealing with the substance of the Sona.

Why paper boats could launch a big volume of words is not a revelation to me. It confirms what I have always thought about our people—i.e., nuances evade us. Everything has to be explicit, otherwise you will be misunderstood.

President Macapagal was not very Filipino when she took some literary liberties by introducing her Sona—clearly for atmosphere—with the metaphor of the paper boats and their messages from the poor. Her tale was not even hyperbole. It was just an ornament of speech. But it brought down a tempest on her head. The reactions reveal more about ourselves and about her critics than about the President.

The boat tale rapidly became the talk of the town—a conversation piece at breakfast. The metaphor—which leaves many things to the imagination—spurred an opposition congressman, Rep. Ronaldo Zamora, to launch a thesis on hydrodynamics.

Zamora talked about opening a congressional inquiry into "the nautical improbability, if not utter impossibility" of three paper boats sailing from the Payatas dump on the Pasig down to Malacañang. He could not quite understand how paper boats could navigate the Pasig encountering "the most inclement weather" and "the most contrary currents." But then, it is not hard to explain why Zamora is puzzled. Zamora was influenced by the milieu of ribald humor in Estrada's Malacañang where what passed for metaphor was slapstick and jokes like "*pupulitin kayo sa kangkungan.*"

The real minority leader in the Senate, Edgardo Angara, who is supposed to be more sophisticated, took off from Ms Macapagal's metaphor with his own metaphor of a nation "riding on *bangkang papel*, sinkable, precarious and going nowhere." His own version of the Sona, composed of 17 pages of text, was heavyweight stuff that could sink Angara's metaphor from its sheer weight.

A columnist took the Sona too literally. He said the President began the address "with a lie." He builds an argument with the explicitness of a demolition worker bludgeoning a fly with a sledgehammer. "Anybody who had ever floated paper boats as a child on sidewalk canals, stream or ponds knows that the story could never have happened," the columnist wrote with the seriousness of a mortician. "A paper boat can stay afloat no more than five minutes. It immediately soaks up water and sinks." The column concludes that the story "is nothing but a tall tale." Perfectly correct, except that he is swinging his fists in the wind.

A cleric, not known for being parsimonious with words, has written a homily based on paper boats. In a variation on the same theme, this cleric said that "it does tax one's credulity to hear of boys from Payatas going down to the Pasig to make their letters float downstream or upstream in order to reach the President."

The cleric's reaction convinces me that Divine Providence is judicious in distributing His gifts of clarity and sensitivity to language. He can withhold these gifts from those, including His ministers, who are incapable of sensitivity to the unstated flavor of language. Such gifts are wasted on them. Clerics have proven they are better at mobilizing people at Edsa than at reading tea leaves, or at writing commentaries on secular public affairs.

The bane of using the tools of language—such as metaphor—to create political symbols is that one is likely to create laughter where none is intended, or to be serious when symbolic expression eludes understanding. In this country, it is necessary to rub our skin with emery paper when we wake up in the morning to convince ourselves that we still have a sense of touch.

The main issue in the Sona is not the story of the paper boats. The most important aspect of the President's speech is that for the first time in the history of the Sona, presidential goals are identified and quantified. The goals have deadlines for completion, and the costs are stated. In doing so, the Sona makes the President accountable for results at the end of the day.

Costings should have been the main focus of criticism and it may be said that although Angara had constructed an inappropriate metaphor, he did touch the heart of the debate by raising questions over the costs, over sources of money and over whether the treasury can afford them. These are valid questions that should refocus the debate on the costs rather than squandering time and effort on firing at paper boats.

The emphasis of the reactions on the paper boats is a manifestation of the tendency in Filipino politics to nit-pick on the trivial rather than to attack the substance of policy and programs spelled out in the Sona. Nit-picking is what most of the reactions are about.

I referred at the beginning to ponderous or pompous reactions. Sen. Blas Ople, for example, reacted that the response of the opposition was the "guns of August," alluding to the outbreak of World War I in August 1914. Ople's reaction shot down right away the President's call for a one-year truce from carping criticism. Ople's reaction was a call for all-out political trench warfare where there are no prisoners taken.

If the markets dipped day after the Sona, the cause does not lie in external factors. The reason is that the market was nervous over the prospects of the guerrilla war between the government and the opposition over its national agenda. The markets foresee a national agenda encountering a scorched-earth policy by the opposition, unless issues-oriented opposition leaders take charge by putting to pasture loose cannons like Ople.

The President did not have to take pains to explain the parable of the paper boats. Explanation is an effort that is wasted on humorless people.

Those paper boats

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

HAVING listeners take one's literary touches literally must be every speechwriter's nightmare. By that measure, the "ghost" behind President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address must be having sleepless nights.

The allusion to three boys from Payatas writing down their appeals to the President, folding these into paper boats and floating them down the Pasig River to reach Malacañang has been ridiculed, decried and even dismissed for its "unscientific" basis. Worse, the "*bangkang papel*" analogy has been seized upon by the opposition to symbolize the fragile, rudderless and endangered state of the economy, if not of the entire Macapagal administration. Calling the three boys who wrote the President asking for jobs, education and decent housing onstage was taxing credulity all the more, critics said. A little too show-bizzy even if it was meant to prove that the paper boats story was true.

If I were the speechwriter I would issue a rejoinder to the literal-minded critics. When Martin Luther King said "I have a dream," did anyone check with a sleep therapist if indeed the civil rights leader dreamt of a better world? When King said he spoke "from a mountaintop," were maps whipped out to check if indeed he was perched on a peak? Locally, when Manuel Quezon urged Filipinos to "be like the Molave," did anyone protest how he expected us to turn into trees?

Perhaps this should have been Erap's tack. The memorable line, which would subsequently come to haunt him, from his inaugural address that in his administration "*walang kama-kamaganak, walang kai-kaibigan*" was just a metaphor *pala*, a poetic, if somewhat blunt, way of expressing his (failed) resolve to run a tight ship (a metaphor, by the way).

* * *

INSTEAD of measuring the capacity of paper to absorb water before it sinks to the depths of the Pasig River, perhaps we should focus on what the young letter-writers were asking of their government. As President Macapagal said, their letters contained, in their simplicity, the sum of the poor's aspirations and expectations from their elected officials.

One thing that struck me was that none of the three boys asked for an outright dole or wished to be given the winning lotto number, even if their abject condition would have justified extravagant wishing.

What they asked for, instead, were the means to achieve their dreams. One wanted a job for his father. Not charity, but employment. One wanted a college education. Again, not charity but a hand up so he could have the means to provide for his family in the future. And the last wanted the government to close down the Payatas dump and relocate the families there to a better, cleaner place. Not charity, even if it would mean the provision of free or low-cost housing, but merely an environment where, in good health, safety and security, they could take their fate in their own hands.

I've always been touched and impressed by how simple and sincere are the poor's "demands" when and if they're given the chance to articulate them. I remember one TV show where poor housewives were asked to write to the host and express a wish. When called to receive their prizes, the winners would invariably be teary-eyed and nearly speechless with gratitude. What struck me was the utter simplicity and practicality of these wishes: a gas stove for a *lola* who wanted to earn some money selling banana cue, an iron and ironing board for a laundress who needed them for her livelihood, an electric fan for a mother who said her asthmatic son needed it so he could sleep peacefully.

* * *

BEYOND WHAT Jayson, Erwin and Jomar wrote in their letters, and whether these letters indeed floated down the Pasig River, what deserves noting is how their messages reached their intended recipient.

The NGO organizers who asked the children from Payatas to fold their letters into boats and send them down the river to Malacañang may have seen it only as a symbolic gesture. But this act of faith and hope, covered by the media and reported on this paper's front page, managed to grab the President's attention.

As this paper noted, the brouhaha over "the parable of the paper boats" at least proved that President Macapagal reads the papers, the INQUIRER in particular. But Christian Esguerra, who reported the story, keenly observed that he "didn't think the message would reach" the President, and if she did, that "she would ignore it."

Instead, despite the many troubles of this nation, from the Abu Sayyaf kidnappings, a falling peso rate and noisy agitation for a minimum wage increase, the President still found the time and energy to take note of what the three boys from Payatas wanted to tell her. More importantly, she immediately grasped the meaning of the message. That what they wanted of government was, in sum, what every Filipino wanted. A responsive President is the least we can wish for this nation, at this time.

* * *

STILL on symbols, the media have gone to town comparing the fate of the three boys to that of another potent symbol of poverty during the Ramos administration.

Plucked once more from the obscurity and ignominy of his poverty, Mang Pandoy made a powerful statement, indeed, about the failure of government to significantly uplift his state after his 15 minutes of fame were over. But what it only proves, to my mind, is how poorly the government television channel pays its talents. Or how quickly money flows through the fingers of someone unused to managing resources.

Will Jayson, Jomar and Erwin suffer the same fate as Mang Pandoy? Only if they expect their abject poverty to be transformed into entitlement. My hope for the three is that they will learn a different lesson from Mang Pandoy. That one's fate is subject as much to one's will and doing, as it is to the winds and waves of the fickle Pasig River.

Antique finds

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

THERE was a time long ago—this sounds like the beginning of a fairly tale or legend—when columns had to be typed out on a manual typewriter or a hard copy churned out of a dot-matrix printer and physically brought to a newspaper office. In time, diskettes could be sent saving everyone the trouble of encoding text and adding mistakes in copy that had little or none at all. Then the fax machine came and columnists could send their copy from home or even half the world away, but this was problematic due to missing lines, faulty transmission, blurred copy or mistakes in encoding. Finally, we have e-mail which is faster, has spell and grammar check and enters the newspaper system without encoding. While things have become easier for me these days, I miss chats and *merienda* with editors and colleagues. However, it is still necessary to drop by the editorial offices once in a quarter to collect snail mail and, more importantly, paychecks.

My pigeon hole at the INQUIRER is usually stuffed on each visit and, aside from the junk mail and "praise releases," there are usually books that make the trip worthwhile. Most fascinating—and timely—was a package from the National Geographic on a documentary that will be aired on Sunday, July 29 at 9 p.m. titled, "The Quest for Noah's Flood." As usual, this revolves around Dr. Robert Ballard, the National Geographic Society explorer-in-residence, who is famous for discovering the wreckage of the Titanic. Recently, he set off to find two Japanese midget submarines that figured in the attack on Pearl Harbor, but returned empty-handed.

This time Ballard explores the Black Sea in search of ancient shipwrecks. This is quite timely in the Philippines today because our seas have become happy hunting grounds for "salvage expeditions." The search for Spanish galleons loaded with silver and other treasures has now expanded. A few months ago the remains of a Chinese junk or some Southeast Asian vessel were found in Zambales. This would not have been newsworthy except that people in the area made a killing selling off the cargo—Oriental ceramics from China, Thailand and Vietnam that predate the arrival of Magellan in 1521. Thus, the underwater archaeological site has been plundered before the National Museum could study it and safeguard any unique pieces. This precious cargo has been dispersed through the lucrative antiques trade in Manila despite close watch by the Coast Guard and local police. Unlike Ballard whose Institute of Exploration uses high-tech sonar, computers and robotic submersible technology, our fishermen have been diving without protective gear using oxygen pumped through a garden hose from an air compressor! Unlike Ballard who is just interested in exploring the deep and clocking in achievements, our divers have deprived us of traces of pre-colonial trade.

Ballard's discoveries have always been ruined by undersea termites that consumed all wooden structures including those in the Titanic. He read a book about the "dead zone" in the Black Sea, an area deep down that has no oxygen and no life forms. With no underwater termites, this area was one big preservation tank that could hold countless ancient ships. While looking for these ancient wrecks, he found evidence of human habitation in the Black Sea that seems to confirm a controversial new theory that the Black Sea was transformed from a fresh water lake to a brackish sea by a cataclysmic flood some time in 5,500 BCE. A flood so terrible that survivors talked about it until it entered legend. Perhaps this is Noah's Great Flood. Unfortunately, explorers generate more questions than answers, pushing the parameters of knowledge further.

Back in the Philippines, there has been a renewed interest in the old town of Taal that lies under that serene lake by Taal Volcano. While we go to Tagaytay to enjoy the cool area and admire the view, we do not realize that there is much history and archaeology waiting to be uncovered from that lake.

More relaxing than "The Quest for Noah's Flood" and the quest for our pre-colonial past that lies underwater were two CDs sent by the Pioneer Insurance and Surety Corp. I thought It was a promotional gimmick to get me to buy an insurance policy but then there were no strings attached to the CDs that featured Grupo Kuerdas, a group formed in 1998 to introduce more Filipino listeners to string ensemble-playing. The CDs are called "The Filipino Soul" and unlike those Jesuit tapes containing mood music for prayer, these contain a selection of Filipino music from the 1890s to the 1950s. Naturally, there are *kundimans* here, but what made my heart leap were two previously unrecorded pieces by Julio Nakpil, the husband of Andres Bonifacio's widow Gregoria de Jesus. I have long wanted to have a recording of his "Marangal na Dalit ng Katagalugan" which, as I have written about in previous columns, could have become our national anthem if Emilio Aguinaldo had not become president of the First Philippine Republic. I guess this compilation of music is useful not just for a historian but for Filipinos trying to find their roots.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu

Can we feed birds outside our smog-bound malls?

COMMENTARY

Juan L. Mercado

MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL—Toss our malls—ShoeMart, Robinsons, Ayala, Gaisano—into the Mall of America here. With its 8.4 kilometers of stores, plus over 12,000 employees, there'd be room to spare.

That impresses the *promdi* passerby, like me and the wife, for example. But there's something more significant.

Just outside this largest indoor mall in North America, beyond sprawling parking lots are cool, clear green spaces and trees. You can inhale crisp, clean bracing lead-free air.

That's unlike the Central Department Store at smog-blanketed Lard Prao in Bangkok. Or equally fume-loaded SM, down by Cebu's port area or Makati.

(Gassed by a noxious cocktail of lead, sulphur dioxide and microscopic fragments wafted in the air, kids in Jakarta or Manila, can lose as much as five IQ points, the World Health Organization and UN Environment Program warn.)

If so-minded, you can also feed the birds—robins, cardinals, thrushes, etc., plus those hardy denizens you see in London's Trafalgar Square; St. Mark's piazza in Venice or the rooftops of uptown Manhattan's apartments: the pigeons.

Unbidden, the haunting melody from the Broadway play "Mary Poppins" echoes in one's mind: "Feed the birds, two pence a bag/two pence..."

The difference is crucial. In Philippine cities, birds must fly through a gauntlet of slingshots, air-guns, pollution. But the most lethal of all threats remains that of crass official disdain. It tolerates wholescale devastation of their habitats.

Thus, our swifts and swallows have long disappeared, along with birds endemic only to Cebu like the siloy or black shama; flower-pecker dicaeum quadricolor or the graybird. "Worse, I have seen birds that will never sing again," Cebu columnist Roy Lu once wrote.

This dates me. But my grandchildren, Camille, Adrian and Alexia, have never seen what fascinated me as a kid in short pants: hawks diving to snatch chicks from frantic hens in outlying Cebu barrios.

They are poorer for this loss, I wryly thought as I watched recently, on a steppe outside Ulaan-Baatar, dozens of hawks soaring in the cold clear Mongolian skies.

In fact, the scaring image of a hen sheltering her chicks was used by the Master from Galilee, to illustrate—in Dante's words—"the love that moves the sun, the moon and other stars."

There are woolly headed nature buffs here too. But most have been taught to see birds—and other species for that matter—as vital links in an interlocking system. Birds perform critical vital functions: from curbing of insects to scattering of seeds.

In the shrinking North Negros Forest Reserve, for example, a University of British Columbia study estimates: 20 percent of the thin timber stands would fail to regenerate, if fruit eating birds were hunted to extinction. But that's about the killing rate today in the Reserve.

Like rivers, birds make up a unique and sensitive early warning system. When rivers dry up, or birds vanish, "they signal"—as the Philippine Red Data Book notes—"the environment is under such stress that species, which lived in them for thousands of years, can no longer survive."

The problem is regionwide, the Asian Development Bank and the United Nations stress in their just-released joint study: State of the Environment in Asia and the Pacific.

"The most seriously threatened bird species of the region include the crested ibis, the Philippine monkey-eating eagle and the blue-winged racquet parrot," the report says.

"Thailand, Java and the central islands of the Philippines have experienced extensive conversion of their natural habitats," the study adds. "About two-thirds of Asian wildlife habitats have already been destroyed." And 70 percent of Indo-Malayan ecosystems have been stripped of their vegetation.

"Today, the Philippines ranks fourth, among countries in Asia, with the most number of threatened bird species," the competent ecological reporter Liberty Pinili has written.

Out of the 323 bird species in Asia under threat, 69 are in the Philippines, Pinili adds. This vests, on us, the dubious title of "No. 4 in the extinction hotspot list."

Ironically, the Philippines is among 17 nations Providence blessed with megadiversity in species. The seven of the 17 are in Asia, namely: Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea—and the Philippines. Does abundance invite wastage?

Yet, no bird, animal, fish or plant slides into extinction alone, Dr. Norman Meyers of Oxford University somberly notes. When they go, they drag along with them unique genes—the building blocks of life.

Genes are spliced into "miracle rice," or high-yielding corn or Dolly the sheep. No one knows which gene we'll need to survive tomorrow. "Only a limited number of species have been catalogued," ADB says. "Even abundant species also experience genetic erosion."

Other problems, like Jose Velarde or the Abu Sayyaf, are not final. They can be corrected. They are reversible.

Not so with the loss of species, like birds. This is irreversible snuffing out of unique life forms. Extinction is forever.

"And what is there to life if a man cannot hear the lonely cry of the whippoorwill," asked the mythical Chief Seattle. "If all the (birds) were gone, men would die from a great loneliness of spirit."

THEY SAID

Bloody reputation

"The interesting thing about the tobacco industry is that its reputation is already so bloody, it takes a lot for people to be shocked."

—Tobacco Products Liability Project chair Richard Daynard, doubting if Philip Morris would suffer a backlash from the company's report that premature death oj smokers represent health cost savings

Well-equipped agency

"What you need now is a body that has the bullet, the ammunition, the tools to be able to cool down the market, and that would be the central bank."

—Union Bank president Victor Valdepenas, urging the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to stem the peso's plunge

Should have beens

"It sometimes takes a tragedy to prick our conscience about what our priorities should have been."

—Mines and Geosciences Bureau regional director Neoman de la Cruz on the tragedy in Baguio as a result of unheeded geological hazard warnings

Directionless

"The government seems to be drifting, without any direction."

—Congressional Budget and Planning Office director general Romulo Neri

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LETTERS

Removing gimmickry from 'rolling stores'

IN ORDER for President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's "1,000 rolling stores" to achieve something for the urban poor beyond gimmickry (which is what many of us remember of them as linked to previous presidents since Ferdinand Marcos) the system needs improvement by more than being a government project.

But some observations. First, when a rolling store is assigned to visit a community, say, on a Monday, the poor don't always have the money to pay for the "basic necessities." On the day they have the money, the rolling stores are not there. Second, from experience, the middle-class families were the ones mostly patronizing these mobile stores. This information came from the National Food Authority people operating the rolling stores.

The National Consumer Affairs Council with its implementing agencies, namely the Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Agriculture, Department of Health, Department of Education, Culture and Sports, created a task force to study other options. The involvement of the business sector, NGO community, cooperative training centers, Church and government were elicited. The task force suggested, with the approval of some NGOs in the communities, that the store outlets should be based in the communities they are supposed to serve, run by trained NGO volunteers accepted and trusted by the community, by the parishes, selected family heads willing to be trained and work with the NFA rolling stores with redefined functions. No additional funds are needed more than what the NFA has been spending. Definitely less.

Through the DTI, a network of producers and manufacturers committed to supply a 10-item essential commodities needed by the urban poor every day at great discount prices. The Generic Association of the Philippines promised to include beyond the 10-essential items "over the counter" quality, cheap medicines. The DOH and health NGOs promised to provide free medical services in the community-based health centers.

There are some bureaucratic kinks acquired from old habits among other government agencies but they can easily be streamlined especially when President Macapagal puts seriousness above gimmickry in her programs for the poor.

The guiding principle is to place the final service and responsibility of the traditional rolling stores (but no longer mobile) in the hands of the communities and the government bureaus, parishes, business sector, Church and NGOs playing only supportive roles.—**RAUL E. SEGOVIA, chair, Citizens Alliance for Consumer Protection; vice chair, National Consumer Affairs Council, 2864C Zamora St., Pasay City**

No underhanded deals in Palawan power project

ALLOW me to react to the column of Neal Cruz on July 25 alleging that the "first scam on the Palawan gas project (is) already underway."

Cruz's column refers to accusations made by Nicanor Sta. Cruz Jr., a casual employee at the Sangguniang Panlalawigan in Palawan. The complaint referred to, the second that Sta. Cruz has made against me and the provincial council, was filed 13 days before the May 14 local and national elections. The first suit was dismissed by the Ombudsman's Office for lack of merit. We expect this one to suffer the same fate.

Since 1997, the provincial government has been pursuing a power development program hinged on greater private sector participation, in view of our very limited finances and the inadequate power supply in the province. With every year that passed, the need became more compelling as the province began to intermittently suffer three- to four-hour power outages. This is still the situation today.

My predecessor, Gov. Salvador P. Socrates, earnestly pursued the power development program. Initial talks were held with power companies, among them a division of Wesco Distribution Inc., a New York-based, publicly listed utility. The joint-venture agreement with the Western Power Corp., the subsidiary formed by Wesco for its Philippine ventures, resulted from years of negotiations that ensued when the US-based firm convinced then Governor Socrates about its capability to undertake a power generation and distribution project. Despite the sense of urgency to alleviate the sorry state of our province's power situation, we made sure to establish the legal basis of our power project partnership.

It was only last January that all legal requirements were complied with, enabling me to execute the joint-venture agreement with WPC. I must stress that my name appears as stockholder of the Palawan Energy Development Corp. (Pedco), a joint-venture firm of the provincial government of Palawan and WPC, in my official capacity as governor. This is true for all provincial officials named as directors of Pedco.

It may benefit your readers to know that under the Corporation Code, only natural persons may form corporations. Thus, the practice of assigning nominees to joint-venture undertakings.

I stand by the legal and moral basis for our power development program, as will be manifested through Pedco. I trust that the Ombudsman will be fair and judicious in determining this.

As always, I submit to the majesty of the law. After all, our only intention is to provide for the development and upliftment of our economic condition in Palawan, which is the call of governance. I believe that the people of Palawan are with me in this endeavor, despite desperate machinations by some political quarters against my integrity.—**MARIO JOEL T. REYES, governor, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan**

Filipino genius

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I GOT the same e-mail Rina Jimenez-David put out the other week, the one written by one Mustafa Idrees in Arab News, a Jeddah-based newspaper, which carries a Filipino Page to cater to the huge Filipino community there.

"We have Filipino workers" is a sign you'll see in some shops and trucks in Saudi Arabia. The advertisement derives from the fact that Filipinos are highly skilled, hardworking and get along well with people. A contrast apparently with Arab workers, who do not possess the same virtues. The sign guarantees that a job will be done well, or indeed done at all. Who knows?—ask Idrees. One day, they might even see the sign on toilets. That might be the only way they could guarantee those toilets would be clean.

It warms the heart, as does another e-mail I got listing Filipino inventions and accomplishments. The list is long, and I can only give a sampling:

Diosdado Banatao helped develop GUI (graphical user interface), without which computer screens would now be able to register only text. Abelardo Aguilar, a doctor from Iloilo, co-discovered Erythromycin. Maria Carlita Rex-Doran produced a concoction from *ampalaya* that treats diabetes and HIV infection, which won for her the World Intellectual Property gold medal in 1989. Ramon Barba discovered that spraying mango trees with potassium nitrate induced flowering all-year round, making the Philippines a leading exporter of mangoes and mango products. Rodolfo Aquino helped develop the IR8, the rice strain that sparked the Green Revolution.

On a lighter note, Filipinos invented the commercial fluorescent lamp, the karaoke (yes, despite the Japanese's claim to it) and Filipino-Americans are the most wired ethnic group in the United States—64 percent of Asian-Americans are "netizens" while 85 percent of Filipino-Americans are. Filipinos are also the preferred OFWs in many countries.

What does all this mean? Well, two things.

First, the Filipino obviously does not lack talent. There is no truth to the rumor that our capacity to make a mess of this country comes from genes. The Filipino is monumentally inventive, which should be obvious from the way he has transformed the jeep into the jeepney. That transformation shows that the Filipino cannot just do things well but that he can do things in style. The jeepney adds not only whole new dimensions to the utility of the jeep—it seats more, at the very least—it also adds whole new dimensions to its aesthetics. Or at least, it improves on its dullness, as some people may be aesthetically assailed by the gaudiness of the jeepney's designs (and lighting, especially at night) and loudness of its boom boxes. Folk art, it's been called, and it's a pretty apt description of it. Of course, the jeepney also belches not very colorful soot and causes traffic snarls that are colorful only in the language everyone gets to use, but that is another story.

The Filipino's capacity for improvisation, or playing things by ear, is legend. The "playing things by ear" is quite literal, Filipino musicians being one of the country's premium exports to Asia. The sign, "We Have Filipino Workers," in Saudi Arabia has a counterpart in many Asian countries, which is, "Filipino band playing tonight." That is a guarantee of satisfaction, a Filipino band not merely being able to play (Western) music exceptionally well but being able to field almost any request. Just hum the tune to the band, as they say in Bangkok and Jakarta, and they'll be able to play it.

Unfortunately, the Filipino does not always use his capacity for inventiveness and improvisation for useful ends. He uses it as well to lie, cheat and steal. Or more commonly, he uses it to get around corners. Sometimes to an astonishing degree: He will go to contortions to get around the law when following the law is in fact easier. He will, for example, go to great lengths to find a "contact" in the LTC when lining up to get a license or to register a car is so much faster. The concept that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line is often alien to us.

Which brings me to the second point. The Filipino does not lack for inventiveness and improvisation, the Filipino is able to accomplish great things, the Filipino has gotten very far ahead while working abroad. So why isn't he able to do so in his own country? Why does he succeed only in making a mess of his own country?

Clearly, it has to do with the system. You put the Filipino in a system where talent and hard work, and not connections, are valued; you put the Filipino in a system where accomplishment and good work, and not social status, are rewarded; you put the Filipino in a system where obeying the law, and not finding a way to skirt it, is considered *wa-is* or even cool; the Filipino will put his inventiveness and improvisational abilities to good use. He will get far ahead in life—as he has in other countries. He will be an asset to the community—as he has been in other countries.

The most wasteful thing in life is talent wasted. It is a person lavished with gifts throwing away those gifts in a life of dissolution and drunkenness. Which is what makes what we've done to ourselves doubly tragic. It is not just that we have made a mess of things, it is that we have done so when we are perfectly capable of carving out a magnificent edifice fit for the gods. It is a friend of mine who pointed out to me that before the War, we had amahs, or Chinese maids while today the Chinese (in Hong Kong and elsewhere) have Filipino maids. We are capable of being masters, but we insist on being servants.

But I do not despair that things can be better. The same inventiveness and capacity for improvisation that we are now putting to the most execrable uses we can still harness to better ends. That is not just a job for our leaders, that is a job for ourselves. Of course, we can always use our own inventiveness and capacity for improvisation to find excuses not to do it, or to wait till others do it. Or we can start doing it ourselves.

The choice is ours.

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com

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The WORLD

LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR

Sri Lanka reopens airport

COLOMBO—Sri Lanka's only international airport reopened on Wednesday, a day after a suicide attack by Tamil Tiger rebels destroyed passenger jets and closed the airport, stranding several thousand tourists.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga, facing growing opposition to her rule, appealed for political support to end the ethnic war

The first plane to land was SriLankan Airlines flight UL 679 with 160 passengers from Sydney.

The aircraft had been diverted to Madras in India just before it was to have landed at almost the exact time the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels launched their attack early on Tuesday.

Officials said at least 13 Tamil rebels and seven military personnel were killed in the attack.

State television said seven suspects had been arrested and Kumaratunga appointed a high-ranking air force officer to head an inquiry.

"May I appeal to all parties to put aside pettiness and anger . . . What is at stake here is the nation's future," Kumaratunga told the nation on state television at the end of a harrowing seven days for the country.

Kumaratunga, who suspended parliament this month before a no-confidence vote in her minority government, said her political opponents should work with her to "end the challenge of terrorism."

SriLanka Airlines chief executive Peter Hill said the next week would be difficult for the company. "We'll have to cobble schedules together and see how it goes," he said.

He added it would take several days to clear the backlog of about 2,000 tourists who were to have flown out on Tuesday.

The extent of the fighting was immediately brought home to the arriving passengers as they taxied by the charred wreckage of three SriLankan Airlines Airbuses.

The airline also had three planes damaged, reducing its fleet to six Airbuses.

The attack, tales of passengers fleeing for their lives amid gunfire and bomb blasts and images of the burned-out planes will wreak further damage to the island's tourist industry. *Reuters*

Rebs posed as travelers

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka—Dressed like travelers, the 13 men at the roadside stand drank tea, ate snacks, chatted, read newspapers and waited for 9:45 p.m.

That's when the power was scheduled to go out Monday night in Katunayake, where Sri Lanka's only international airport is located, as is a major air base. A tropical island, Sri Lanka depends on rain to generate electricity, and the recent lack of monsoons had forced rolling power cuts.

That's when the Tamil Tiger rebels made their move.

Taking advantage of the darkness, the rebels headed to an abandoned soccer field next to Katunayake Air Base, 30 km north of the capital of Colombo. There they began stealthy preparations that culminated six hours later in a devastating attack on the base and the airport that left all of them dead.

They destroyed or damaged 14 military aircraft and passenger planes, killed seven military personnel and struck a hard blow to Sri Lanka's tourist-based economy.

Piece by piece, area residents, policemen, military officers and taxi drivers filled in the picture of how it happened: the fiercest attack in the 18 years since the rebels began fighting for a homeland for Sri Lanka's 3.2 million ethnic Tamil minority. *AP*

Climate deal approved after drama

BONN—A landmark political deal on the UN's Kyoto Protocol was formally adopted on Wednesday by signatory countries after facing last-minute Russian demands for more concessions, delegates said.

The package was adopted by a plenary session of senior officials after a marathon negotiation round by environment ministers.

The deal features big concessions by the European Union to Australia, Canada, Japan and Russia that weakened the climate-change pact but at least enabled it to survive after its rejection by the United States in March.

The EU environment commissioner, Margot Wallstrom, hailed what she said was the "victory of multilateralism over unilateralism."

She said: "The international community has sent a very strong message to the United States" and US President George W. Bush.

But the package had to steer around final demands from Russia, which pushed for extra concessions on the question of forest "sinks," one of the Protocol's hardest-fought arenas, Argentine delegate Raoul Estrada said.

Russia also raised questions about access to the accord's trade mechanisms, another headache issue. But both challenges will be addressed in supplementary documents and adoption of the deal was not affected.

If approved, these demands would have further sapped Kyoto as a tool for tackling dangerous emissions of "greenhouse" gases, and conference chairman Jan Pronk sternly warned he would not accept backsliding.

"I am here to safeguard the integrity of the political agreement," he told delegates.

That tone found an echo from European Union and developing countries, which spelt out their commitment to the deal.

Kyoto commits 38 industrialized countries to cutting their emissions of carbon-rich gases back to 5.2 percent below 1990 levels by a 2008-2012 timeframe.

Scientists say these gases, mainly the byproduct of industrialization, are causing the Earth to warm, with potentially disastrous effects on the global climate system for future generations. **AFP**

Studies boost hope there's water on Mars

PARIS—Hopes that water may exist in big quantities outside the Earth are boosted by new studies published yesterday which suggest Mars has vast icy deposits lurking close to its surface, while Callisto, one of Jupiter's moons, has a deep subterranean ocean.

Geologists at Brown University, Rhode Island, believe pictures of pitted, hummocky terrain captured by Nasa's Mars Global Surveyor orbiter indicate shallow reservoirs of ice just below the dusty martian surface.

The layer occurs in the planet's mid-latitudes, in bands between 30 and 60 degrees, they report in Nature, the British science weekly.

Their calculation is that the reservoir is the equivalent of a layer of water between 10 and 40 cm deep covering the entire planet.

Comparing this evidence with previous models of Mars' climate, the geologists suggest the reservoir had been created during the red planet's last ice age, 100,000 years ago.

Separately, a study by Javier Ruiz at Madrid's Universidad Complutense contends the cratered and pitted surface of Callisto, one of Jupiter's four big moons, may conceal a deep ocean.

His conclusion is based on a reappraisal of data from a flyby by the spacecraft Galileo, which detected a magnetic field around the moon.

Excited researchers initially believed that this field was caused by an ocean of salt water whose dynamic, fluctuating currents were conducting an electric current.

But these hopes were dashed when calculations, based on the rate at which Callisto's surface convects heat, seemed to show that any subsurface ocean would have frozen solid long ago.

But, Ruiz says in Nature, those calculations are flawed. The chilly moon is probably coated with a hard icy shell, which would prevent heat loss, and this would skew the convection arithmetic. *AFP*

Bigating Sasakyan...
...Sa Magaang Financing Plan!
CANTER
MITSUBISHI

Vehicle shown with optional cab spoiler and truck body.

Ngayon, mas madaling magkaroon ng inyong maaasahang sasakyang pang-negosyo, the Mitsubishi Canter FE515 at FE635. Matatag, praktikal at ngayon, may financing plan na magaan sa bulsa.

MODEL : CANTER FE515

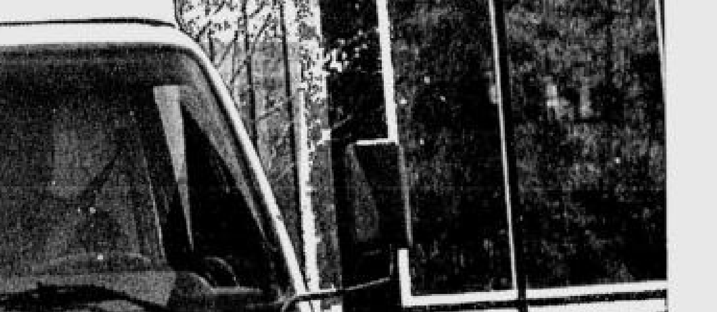
TERM		12	18	24	36	48	60
%	D/P	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
20.0%	134,000	48,990	33,899	27,032	19,409	15,046	14,170
25.0%	167,500	45,928	31,781	25,342	18,196	14,668	13,284
30.0%	201,000	42,866	29,662	23,653	16,983	13,690	12,399
35.0%	234,500	39,804	27,543	21,963	15,770	12,712	11,513
40.0%	268,000	36,743	25,425	20,274	14,557	11,735	10,627
45.0%	301,500	33,681	23,306	18,584	13,344	10,757	9,742
50.0%	335,000	30,619	21,187	16,895	12,131	9,779	8,858

MODEL : CANTER FE635

TERM		12	18	24	36	48	60
%	D/P	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
20.0%	149,000	54,474	37,694	30,057	21,582	17,398	15,756
25.0%	186,250	51,069	35,338	28,179	20,233	16,310	14,771
30.0%	223,500	47,665	32,982	26,300	18,884	15,223	13,786
35.0%	260,750	44,260	30,627	24,422	17,536	14,135	12,802
40.0%	298,000	40,856	28,271	22,543	16,187	13,048	11,817
45.0%	335,250	37,451	25,915	20,665	14,838	11,961	10,832
50.0%	372,500	34,046	23,559	18,786	13,489	10,873	9,847

**All financing plans are subject to bank approval.*
***Not included truck body and optional cab spoiler.*

PROMO ENDS JULY 31, 2001



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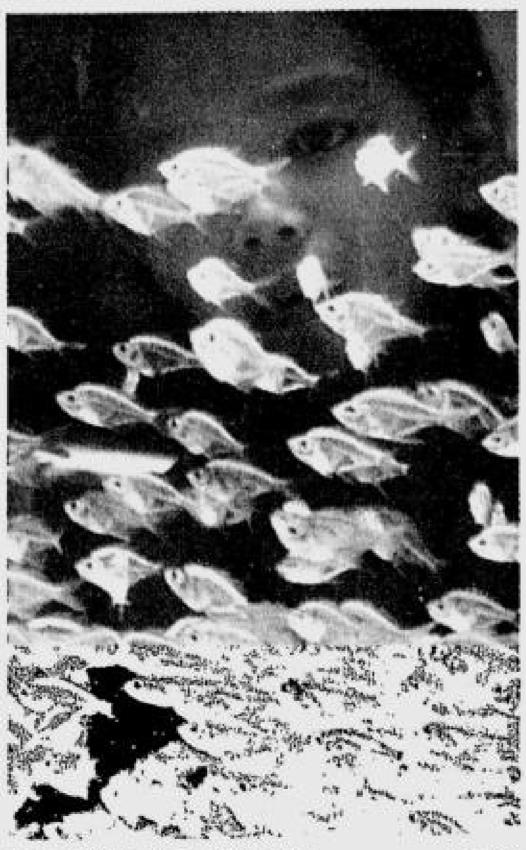

CUSTOM-MADE FISH REUTERS

A Taiwanese girl looks at a tank full of painted fish used to attract visitors during an exhibition in Taipei July 26. The fish are individually hand-painted with dyes that last up to two or three years.

China frees US scholars convicted of spying

BEIJING—China yesterday freed two US-based scholars convicted of spying on medical parole just two days ahead of a visit by US Secretary of State Colin Powell, US and Chinese officials said.

Gao Zhan, who was arrested in February with her husband and five-year-old son while on a family holiday in China, boarded a plane in Beijing headed for Detroit yesterday morning, a US Embassy official said.

She left on Northwest Airlines flight NW88 at 9:10 a.m. and was due to land in Detroit at 10:05 a.m. local time, the official and one of her Chinese lawyers, Yuan Tao, said.

"The court granted her medical parole. We saw her get on the flight," Yuan said.

"Gao Zhan is on an airplane to the United States," said a senior State Department official in Hanoi travelling with Powell on his Asian tour.

Qin Gunangguang, who was arrested in December on a visit to China, was also released on medical parole, according to the Chinese foreign ministry. It was not immediately clear whether he had left China.

A Northwest Airline official said Qin Guangguang was not booked on same flight as Gao.

The releases came a day after Beijing deported US citizen Li Shaomin who was convicted of spying on July 14.

The expulsion of Gao and the release of Qin, despite their convictions in a swift trial Tuesday on charges of spying for Taiwan, removes a major irritant in US-China relations before Powell's visit on Saturday.

Washington and Gao's lawyer had appealed for Gao's release on humanitarian grounds, saying she had recently had to be hospitalized for heart problems.

Qin also applied for release on humanitarian grounds.

Powell hinted in Hanoi Wednesday that Gao and several other Chinese Americans held on spying charges in China in cases which have soured Sino-US relations could soon be freed on "humanitarian" grounds.

Powell emerged from a meeting at a Hanoi hotel Wednesday with Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan in an upbeat mood.

"We talked about some of the cases that have been in the press. I am pleased that several of those cases are now on the way to resolution on humanitarian grounds," Powell told reporters.

"You will see that in a quite obvious way within the next 24 or so hours."

A US Embassy spokesperson said the US government was pressing for the release of at least two others held.

AFP

US marine gets jail term for Okinawa arson

TOKYO—A Japanese court yesterday sentenced a 24-year-old US marine stationed in Okinawa to five years in prison for setting fire to local bars and small restaurants.

The Naha District Court in Okinawa handed down the verdict to Lance Corporal Kurt Billie, who was arrested on Feb. 19 for the arson attacks, a court spokesperson said.

"The crimes were vicious and caused tremendous damage to the property," said presiding judge Soichi Hayashida.

Billie, according to the ruling, broke into two small restaurants in the early hours of Jan. 15 and set them on fire with a cigarette lighter.

He again broke into the same restaurants and three bars on Jan. 20 and burned walls and roofs with his lighter. No one was injured in the attacks.

Prosecutors had demanded the US Marine from Camp Hansen get seven years in jail. During the trial, Billie testified he set the fires to vent his frustrations, Kyodo News agency said.

Calls for the US military presence to be reduced or withdrawn altogether from the strategically located island chain have mounted following a series of alleged crimes involving US servicemen.

On Wednesday, the 24-strong municipal assembly in Okinawa City, which hosts the sprawling Kadena US Air Base, unanimously approved a draft resolution demanding the United States and Japan impose a midnight curfew and create off-limits areas for US military personnel.

The draft followed Saturday's arrest of two US military personnel for separate cases of vandalism and the July 6 arrest of US Air Force Staff Sgt. Timothy Woodland, who has been charged with raping a Japanese woman in the parking lot of a shopping mall on June 29.

AFP

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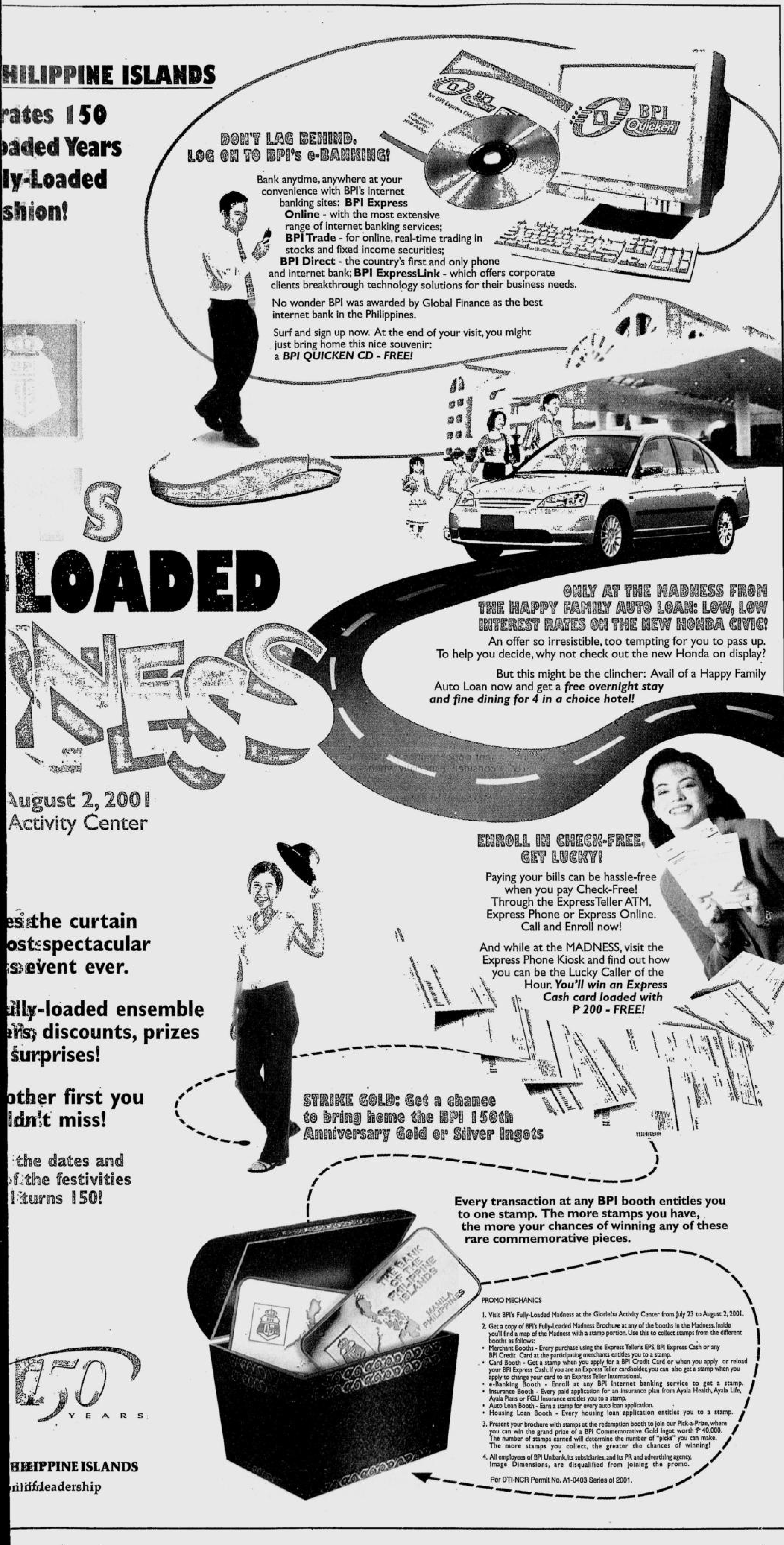
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THE QUEEN IS DEAD REUTERS

A woman breaks into tears while paying her last respects over the body of Phoolan Devi, also known as the "Bandit Queen," in New Delhi, July 26. Devi was shot dead outside her house by masked gunmen on Wednesday, ending a legend that began in poverty and rape, becoming a quest for revenge and ending with her election to parliament.

US backs out of anti-germ warfare pact

GENEVA—The United States announced Wednesday it was giving up on nearly seven years of global talks to enforce the ban on germ warfare, the latest in a string of go-it-alone US positions.

"In our assessment, the draft protocol would put national security and confidential business information at risk," US chief negotiator Donald A. Mahley said, announcing the decision based on a thorough review of the 210-page document by US President George W. Bush's administration.

The United States will refuse to participate in further attempts to negotiate on the proposal, Mahley said, effectively killing the process, which requires consensus from everyone if the protocol is to be approved.

"More drafting and modification of this text would, in our view, still not yield a result we could accept," Mahley said.

The US decision, following Washington's rejection of a climate change accord and doubts about other arms-control agreements, left a 56-nation negotiating forum in Geneva wondering what it could do to prevent development and use of biological weapons.

"We may need a few days to reflect," said Ambassador Seiichiro Noboru, head of the Japanese delegation.

Noboru said negotiators had to figure out how to bring the United States back on board because the protocol "still presents the most realistic way to strengthen" the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention.

"US participation is imperative for our task to set up stringent compliance measures," he said.

Tibor Toth, the Hungarian diplomat chairing the biological weapons negotiations that began in January 1995, said he would examine the US position to see what could be done.

Virtually all the other 55 countries have come out with statements supporting the draft proposal, although some are holding out for changes to be negotiated in the next three weeks. *AP*

WORLD BRIEFS

Macedonia rebs to pull out

TETOVO, Macedonia—Hours after thousands of Macedonians fled the country's second-largest city, fearing a major offensive against ethnic Albanian rebels there, the government announced that the insurgents had agreed to withdraw. The agreement announced late Wednesday appeared to ease the threat of the offensive and revived hopes for a peaceful settlement to a conflict that has threatened to launch Macedonia into full-scale civil war. In recent days, the ethnic Albanian National Liberation Army overran four villages surrounding northern Tetovo and clashed with government troops at the city's outskirts in fierce fighting that broke a ceasefire that had held for more than two weeks. Macedonia's Defense Ministry said that under the deal worked out by Nato, the rebels would pull back from those villages by dawn yesterday. The agreement followed a government ultimatum to the rebels to pull back or face an all-out assault. *AP*

Iraq fires at US spy plane

WASHINGTON—Iraq fired a surface-to-air missile at an American U-2 spy plane over southern Iraq, reflecting a significant change in Iraqi strategy as it targets US and British planes patrolling its airspace, US officials said. The US plane was not hit. The crew of the US aircraft was flying Wednesday as part of Operation Southern Watch, a joint US and British operation patrolling the no-fly zones over Iraq, Pentagon spokesperson Lt. David Gai said. Operation Southern Watch is designed to protect Kurdish and Shiite groups against government forces. *AP*

N. Korea's Kim in Russia

VLADIVOSTOK, Russia—North Korean leader Kim Jong-il crossed into Russia's Far East yesterday to start a marathon train journey to Moscow for a meeting with President Vladimir Putin, a customs spokesperson said. It normally takes seven days from the North Korean border to Moscow by train. Tass quoted "highly placed" sources as saying Kim was expected in the Russian capital by Aug. 4. Kim's trip to Russia, agreed during Putin's visit to North Korea last year, has been shrouded in mystery. *Reuters*

Hamas militant killed

NABLUS, West Bank—Israel tracked and killed a Palestinian activist of the militant Islamic group Hamas on Wednesday in an attack that turned his car into mangled metal and prompted swift calls for revenge. Medical workers collected pieces of Salah Darwaza's body from the vehicle near the Al-Ayn refugee camp close to the Palestinian-controlled West Bank city of Nablus. Palestinian witnesses said it appeared four rockets or tanks shells hit the car. The Israeli Army said it carried out the attack, the latest in Israel's declared policy of "targeted killings" of Palestinian militants. *Reuters*

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Logging culprit in floods, slides in North, says GMA

BAGUIO CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo said it was illegal logging, not garbage, which did the Cordillera in during the onslaught of Typhoon Feria early this month.

"I am asking the residents of Baguio to stop the cutting of pine trees. You will be contributing to air pollution if you do that. You will also create landslides," the President said in Filipino during an audience with typhoon victims at the presidential mansion here on Wednesday.

"Who would have thought that Baguio would be flooded?" she said, referring to the massive flooding that affected this mountain city's central business district and its villages.

The City Camp Lagoon Village, which has not been flooded for four years, was submerged in more than 10 feet of floodwater on July 4, leaving hundreds of residents homeless.

Ms Macapagal asked Cordillera residents to reforest their mountains to prevent the tragedy of Ormoc City in Leyte 10 years ago when rainwater from the mountains swept the city and killed hundreds of residents.

"We are fortunate not to have the Ormoc incident repeated," she said. "We should start reforesting especially here in the Cordillera that is the watershed of most of the rivers here."

Ms Macapagal earlier visited Vigan City in Ilocos Sur and Lagangilang, Abra, to assess the damage wrought by Feria.

"The Quirino Bridge (in Bantay, Ilocos Sur), which is a very long and huge bridge (had) four of its spans collapsing. The river went over the bridge that is already very high. How could that happen? They told me logs jammed the bridge causing the spans to give way," she said.

The headwaters of the Abra River over the Quirino Bridge came from the forests of upland Abra.

"I talked to Abra Gov. (Vicente) Valera about it and he told me that the logs were not illegally logged but were uprooted by past typhoons. Now, why were they uprooted if not for past deforestation in the area?" she said.

In Ilocos Sur, Ms Macapagal approved the repair of the wiped out portion of the Quirino Bridge that she personally inspected.

"President Macapagal-Arroyo had already given the go signal for its repair," said Ilocos Sur Gov. Deogracias Victor Savellano.

"The construction would start this August and could be finished in November this year," he said.

Arroyo, accompanied by former Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson and some members of her Cabinet, visited Ilocos Sur and Abra that were devastated by Typhoon Feria.

Josefino Rigor, Department of Public Works and Highways director for the Ilocos, said they have recommended the "New Waagner Biro Modular Bridge" imported from Austria to replace the damaged portion of the bridge.

A representative from Waagner Biro, maker of the bridge, briefed the President as she and her party were ferried in a barge along the Abra River to inspect the bridge.

Ms Macapagal also approved the release of P3 million for Ilocos Sur.

She also went to Lagangilang, the first town in Abra that her father, former President Diosdado Macapagal, visited during his term in the 1960s.

"Take care of our trees. The budget of the DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) for reforestation is very huge. It should be used," Ms Macapagal said.

She said the reforestation program should be communal.

Thirty-five Baguio residents were killed during Feria's onslaught, most of them buried by landslides. Property damage estimated at P650 million was also reported in the city. ***Frank Cimatu, Leoncio Balbin Jr., Vincent Cabreza and Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Kidnap suspect's wife slams arrest

DAVAO CITY—The wife of Henry Hernandez, one of the arrested suspects in the abduction of 11-year-old Ryan James Yu in Cebu City, appealed to authorities to spare her husband from the kidnapping case because he was innocent.

Mary Jul Hernandez said although her husband is innocent, reports linking him to the kidnapping have shamed their family.

Mary Jul, caretaker of the Boulangerie Bakery in Victoria Plaza here, said her husband has been working for the Ramen Tei Japanese Restaurant since 1990 and was never absent.

But she admitted that Henry's brother Efren, who was also arrested, was their regular visitor in Piapi.

The brothers and three other suspects were arrested while accepting ransom inside the Davao International Airport hours after lawmen rescued Yu in Cebu City.

Yu, a student of the Catholic-run St. Francis of Assisi in Cebu, was on his way to school around 8 a.m. on Monday when two motorcycle-riding men seized him.

In Cebu, authorities learned that the house on Salinas Drive Extension in Barangay Lahug, where kidnap victim Ryan James Yu was kept by his abductors, was owned by the brother of Cagayan de Oro City Mayor Vicente Emano.

But Dr. Hernando Emano denied any involvement in the kidnapping of the 11-year-old son of the Chinese-Filipino on Monday.

"If there is a need for the (police) to investigate me, I will welcome that to clear our name," he said over radio station dyLA yesterday.

Emano is a native of Taguluan, Misamis Oriental but he now resides with his family in Cagayan de Oro City.

He bought the house in 1993 after his children went to Cebu City to study. But he had the house rented out after his children moved to a bigger house.

Emano said he learned that the kidnappers had rented his house in BC Homes Subdivision, Salinas Drive when the police recovered the boy on Wednesday.

"I learned about the kidnapping (in the newspaper) but we never knew that the victim was brought (to our house in Lahug)," he said.

Emano said a man who claimed to own a lending business rented the house from Joy Lledo, Emano's relative who is the house's caretaker.

The man, who did not give his name, paid P17,000 as two months deposit for the house. Emano said the man claimed that he and his wife would use the house for an indefinite period.

Lledo, Emano said, did not bother to check if the couple had moved into the house after giving the key to the man last week.

Emano said they only learned that Ryan James was brought to the house on Wednesday after reading in the newspapers that the boy was abandoned there by his kidnappers.

Police recovered Ryan James about 9:15 a.m. inside the house, just two days after he was abducted on Monday while on his way to school.

The house was just less than a kilometer away from where the boy was kidnapped in Peace Valley, Lahug.

Police said the kidnappers abandoned the boy about 3 a.m. after they noticed that policemen were conducting a stakeout in the area.

Five of the kidnappers' accomplices were arrested at the Davao International Airport where a payoff was set up about 3 p.m. on Wednesday. ***Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau and Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Gabriela member murdered at home

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—A human rights worker and member of the women's group Gabriela was killed by two unidentified armed men on Sunday, according to a human rights group in the province.

Dorris Cuario, Karapatan-Laguna para-legal officer, identified the victim as Milagros Belga, 41, married with eight children and a resident of Barangay Malinao, Magdalena, Laguna.

Cuario was a volunteer worker of Karapatan, a human rights group in this province.

The Karapatan report quoted witnesses as saying that about 3 p.m., July 22, Belga was seen talking with a neighbor when her 10-year-old daughter fetched her because two men were looking for her at home.

Belga went home to talk to the male visitors.

The children said they overheard the men borrowing money from her.

But shortly after, they witnessed one of the men shoot then stab their mother.

The Karapatan report quoted one of the children as saying that one of the suspects was a member of Citizens' Armed Forces Geographical Unit in Magdalena, Laguna.

Human rights groups said the killing of Belga could be part of the military's anti-insurgency campaign in Laguna.

The groups said Belga's killing was just one of 42 cases of human rights violations in the province that they documented since President Macapagal was installed to power in January. ***Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon and Visayas will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread over Bicol region and Eastern Visayas. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: **PAGASA**

Metro Manila	Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 24°
Baguio	Cloudy	HI 23° Lo 15°
Tuguegarao	Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 22°
Laoag	Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 23°
Tagaytay	Cloudy	HI 29° Lo 22°
Legazpi	Cloudy	HI 30° Lo 24°
Calapan	Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 23°
Bacolod	Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 24°
Roxas	Cloudy	HI 30° Lo 26°
Cebu	Cloudy	HI 30° Lo 24°
Tacloban	Rains	HI 30° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 23°
Davao	Partly Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/07/27/01

ROUNDUP

3 Koreans nabbed

DAVAO CITY—Agents of the Bureau of Immigration here arrested three Koreans caught working without permits. Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo identified the Koreans as Park Young Kwon, Lee Sang An, and Lee Ji Ho, who were arrested at their workplace on R. Castillo Street here. They were arrested at the office of the Jae Sung Motors Inc., which they allegedly owned and operated without investors' visas or work permits from the BI.
Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Army assailed for arrests

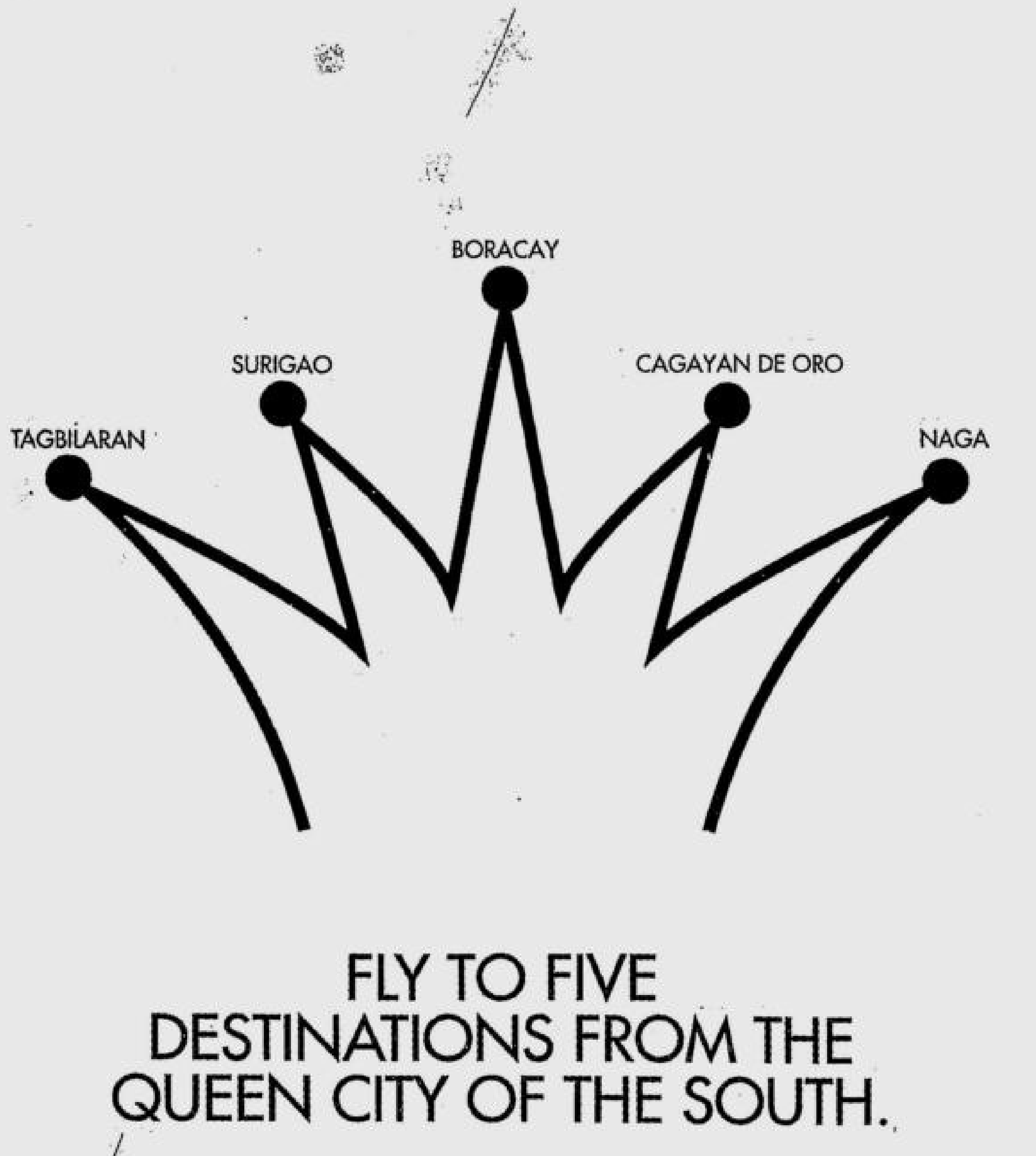
MATI, Davao Oriental—Farmers in Barangay Sanghay denounced the arbitrary arrests allegedly being made by the Army's 8th Special Forces in their area. Robinson Diolan, chair of the Calasagan United Farmers' Association, said soldiers have terrorized the residents threatening to harm them because of their alleged ties with the New People's Army. Maj. Alexis Gopico, commander of the 8th Special Forces Battalion, vowed to investigate the farmers' allegations that his men were involved in atrocities against civilians.
Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Bombing plan foiled

PAGADIAN CITY—A bombing plot was uncovered here after bystanders found a crudely-made bomb tucked inside the baggage compartment of a bus on Wednesday afternoon. Chief Insp. Dionesio Perdiguiz Jr., city police director, told the INQUIRER that the bomb was found inside a Victory Bus Liner bus parked on a busy section of Aquino and Jamisola Streets. The bus came from Margosatubig, Zamboanga del Sur and was about to be driven to the Cerilles Bus Terminal after it unloaded its passengers about 3:45 in the afternoon. The bomb, police found out, was connected to the bus' engine and would be set off by the turning on of the bus' ignition system.
Hernan de la Cruz, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Erratum

THE HEADLINE of the story on dengue fever in the Visayas that appeared in the Across the Nation yesterday should have read "Ex-Negros gov not spared from dengue plague," not "Ex-Bacolod gov . . ." We apologize for the error.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ADMITTED ASSETS		
Bonds	P	145,353,525.00
Treasury Bills		81,141,870.21
Stocks		5,961,604.90
Mortgage Loans		3,000,000.00
Policy Loans		158,988.70
Guaranteed Loans		26,250,000.00
Other Loans		65,732.00
Security Fund		155,927.00
Cash on Hand and in Banks		28,220,864.43
Net Life Insurance Premiums & Annuity Considerations Due & Uncollected		4,625,370.00
Accrued Investment Income		5,435,642.16
Other Admitted Assets		4,339,617.21
Total Admitted Assets	P	**304,709,141.61**
LIABILITIES		
Aggregate Reserve for Life Policies & Contracts		48,415,649.20
Policy and Contract Claims		1,389,732.34
Amounts Due to Accepting Companies		1,733,717.99
Liability for Premium Deposit Funds		3,256,498.52
Reserve for Dividends to Policyholders / Dividend Held on Deposit		1,385,851.26
Taxes Payable		1,929,323.14
Unearned Bond Discount		2,256,310.85
Other Liabilities		19,541,176.18
Total Liabilities	P	**79,908,259.48**
STOCKHOLDER'S EQUITY		
Capital Stock Paid-Up		250,000,000.00
Special Surplus Fund:		
Fluctuation Reserve - Stock/Bond Investment		28,129.00
Contributed Surplus		50,000,000.00
Retained Earnings		(75,227,246.87)
Total Stockholder's Equity	P	**224,800,882.13***
Total Liabilities & Stockholder's Equity	P	**304,709,141.61**

*Capital Impairment/Margin of solvency deficiency of Php 27,541,865.57 subsequently covered up in full.

(This synopsis, prepared from the 1999 Annual Statement and approved by the Insurance Commissioner, is published pursuant to Section 225 of the Insurance Code, as amended.)

John Hancock.

W. Visayas execs demand probe of rice smuggling

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Authorities are seeking an investigation of the reported attempt to bring in about P8.2 million worth of suspected smuggled rice to Iloilo amid fears that Western Visayas has become a transshipment point of smuggled goods.

Rene Villa, presidential assistant for Western Visayas, and Dominic Abad, regional director of the Department of Trade and Industry, demanded to know how the MV Enterprise I, carrying about 11,000 bags of rice and yellow corn, made it to the Bay-ang Port in Ajuy town, 85 kilometers north of here.

About 2,000 of the 11,000 bags of rice were unloaded into trucks before customs and Navy officials arrived in Bay-ang Tuesday afternoon and issued a warrant of seizure and detention against the vessel and its cargo.

Customs Collector Juan Tan said the seizure proceedings would start soon.

The rice and corn were consigned to a certain Jerome Bacabac and Jose Arboleda and the Rojas Rice Mill. As of Wednesday, no one came to claim the shipment, said Tan.

The port of Bay-ang was once a loading dock for sugarcane before these are shipped to sugar mills in Negros Occidental. Ships seldom dock at the port today after sugar planters here all but abandoned sugarcane planting because of losses.

Tan said he would speed up the seizure proceedings on the ship and its cargo and would also file a case against the consignees.

A seizure procedure formally declares that the ship and cargo are seized by the government pending investigation of the case.

Incidents of huge volumes of suspected smuggled rice arriving in Western Visayas have been on the rise in recent months, with many of the cases recorded in Negros Occidental.

A task force was recently formed in Bacolod City to investigate the reported smuggling.

Villa told a press conference on Wednesday that he had asked National Bureau of Investigation chief Reynaldo Wycoco to conduct an investigation to determine the identities of the persons involved in the shipment of huge volumes of rice to Western Visayas.

Villa said there were seizures but there have been no arrests of persons behind the questionable shipment.

"It is a crime without criminals. Somehow these (trigger) suspicions that those tasked to enforce the laws are in cahoots with the ones violating the laws," he said.

Villa said the seized rice came from other countries but smugglers make it appear that they originated from provinces in the Visayas and Mindanao.

Rice shipment seized at port in Pangasinan

DAGUPAN CITY—Some 25,000 sacks of rice, suspected smuggled at a fishing port in Sual town, were impounded by the Bureau of Customs while 950 kilos of illegally caught *galunggong* (round scad) and other fish were confiscated by the maritime police on Saturday.

Baltazar Morales, officer-in-charge of the Northern Luzon Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service, issued the hold order on the MV Molave that carried the rice shipment worth P18 million "for lack of proper documentation."

"The release of the vessel and the rice is hereby ordered and decreed held within the fishing port complex (under) the jurisdiction of the sub-port collector of customs, Port of Sual," Morales said in his order.

Customs Collector Benjamin Santos said, however, they have yet to determine if the rice shipment, which reportedly came from Sultan Kudarat, was smuggled.

He said Customs Deputy Commissioner Rey Alias sent customs personnel to Sual to inspect the papers of the rice shipment consigned to the Primero Rice Mill (15,000 sacks) and one Benjamin de la Cruz (10,000 sacks) of San Jacinto town.

Piolito Santos, manager of the National Food Authority in western Pangasinan, said the rice shipment is considered an inter-island transaction "based on the documents presented to us (saying) that the shipment came from Sultan Kudarat."

"The NFA does not give shipping permits anymore so we do not have (a) basis to monitor (the) shipment," Santos said.

It was learned that the rice shipment was the sixth to be made to the two consignees in the last six months but it was only now that it was ordered held.

The maritime police also confiscated 950 kilos of *galunggong* and assorted fish caught through dynamite fishing during operations conducted since Saturday.

Chief Insp. Mateo Casupang, chief of the maritime police headquarters, said they arrested six people suspected of involvement in the trade of illegally caught fish.

They are Arturo Reyes, 40, of Bulacan who was caught while selling 210 kilos of fish at the Magsaysay market on July 21; Helen Salazar, 31, and Julius Pacosana, 24, whose vehicle loaded with 300 kilos of *galunggong* and other fish, was intercepted by the maritime police on July 23.

The other fish dealers arrested were Paula Tagigne, 60; Cielo Tadeo, 35; and Danny Piano, 36, all of Ilocos Sur, who were caught with their vehicle loaded with 440 kilos of *galunggong*.

Charges of illegal fishing were filed against the suspects.

Casupang said the estimated value of the fish confiscated was P66,000. He said samples from the confiscated fish were examined by Michael Tabora, who was deputized by the Bureau of Fish and Aquatic Resources, and were confirmed to be caught using homemade explosives.

Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Execs get death threats after scam

T'BOLI, South Cotabato—Five ranking officials here received death threats after they uncovered alleged illegal cash advances made by the former mayor.

Mayor Dad Tuan also allegedly left the executive office without operational funds until the end of this year.

"It's definitely not from (the) New People's Army," said newly elected Mayor Sarse Atam on the death threats.

Atam said the bullets sent to the officials "may be related to the cash advances" of his predecessor Dad Tuan.

The live bullets were left in one of the offices here with a piece of paper bearing the names of Bella Agullana, the town's local government operations officer; treasurer Fred Pacunla; public information officer Doming Silotario; assessor Ronar Guardaya; and Castulo Pedroso Jr., the municipal engineer.

Atam confirmed that Tuan took a cash advance of about P3.8 million from the town's coffers.

Mary Jean Bibanco, municipal accountant, said all the cash advances of Tuan had been liquidated and "backed by proper appropriations."

Bibanco, however, admitted that some cash advances were made to pay for "revolutionary taxes" being demanded by communist guerrillas.

Tuan said the cash advances were "all for good purposes." *Joey R.B. Lozano, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

TRIVIA: Do you know that in the middle ages, prior to the discovery of plumbing, it was socially acceptable to relieve oneself in public? In fact, French King Louis XIII 's throne came equipped with a chamber pot to allow him to hold court or play cards while relieving himself. Ironically, while the king prefers relieving himself in public, he prefers to eat in solitude, away even from his family.

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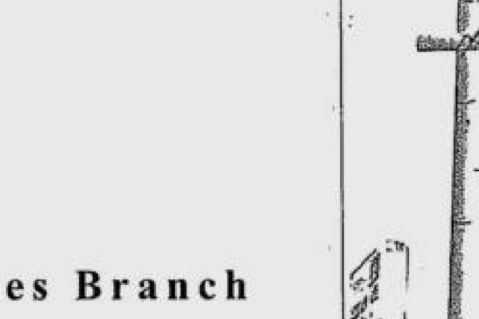

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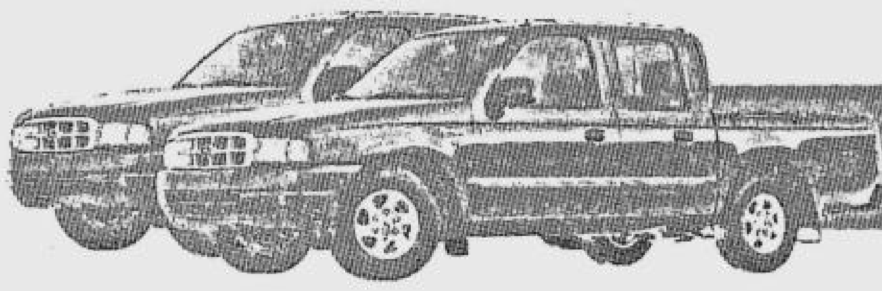

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San Pablo City, Laguna

Joy P. Zamora
Zone 3, Sto. Niño 1st,
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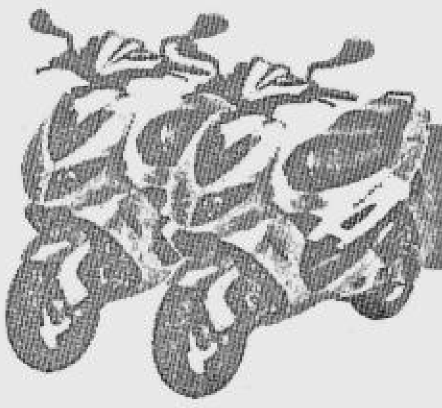
San Jose City



• 2 winners of Peugeot Motorcycles

Ma. Luz Cruz
28 Katarungan St.,
Caniogan, Pasig City
SM Megamall (Counter)
Mandaluyong City

Leilani A. Flores
San Juan Vil., Phase II Block 8,k Lot
6, San Carlos City, Negros Occ.
SLY Photo Shop
San Carlos City, Negros Occ.

Congratulations sa Consolation Prize Winners ng Fuji Instax 100 Cameras

• 33 winners for the Film Box Category

NCR & Region 4

Ting Asual	Blk. 18 Lot 20 Lagro Subd., Quezon City	FIS SM Fairview
Aireen Bagui	Zone 1, Socorro, Oriental Mindoro	Pinamalayan Photo Center
Fernando Bituin	Sto. Rosario, Palinan, Orani, Bataan	Orani Photo Center
Rodney R. Bringas	30-D Cliff Drive, Blue Ridge, Quezon City	YKL Main
Alvin Calabia	120 San Francisco St., San pablo City	Maring's Photo Center
Nina Carla L. Canon	Gansico St., Poblacion 3, Naiyan, Orintal Mindoro	Color Master Photo, Calapan
Celeste M. Castro	A. Ignacio St., Lumang-Bayan, Calapan City	Color Master Photo, Calapan
Marieta Falejo	Villa Escudero	Maring's Bazaar San Pablo City
Raquel R. Francisco	958 Cuyab, San Pedro, Laguna	FIS-Megamall
Marites M. Griego	San Joaquin, Sto. Tomas, Batangas	Maring's Bazaar
Epifania A. Moreno	66 Amsterdam St., Provident Vil. Tanong, Markina City	Jelly Bean Studio
Rommel G. Placido	235 J. Rizal St., Mandaluyong City	Color Stop
Medel Ramos	11-Esteban St., Malibay, Pasig City	Yes Photo Center
Pacita Sumalpong	Baybay Triumpo, Ozamis City, Mindanao	FIS-Robinsin
Susan Suprano	55 Molave St., Proj. 3, Quezon City	Anson Color Lab
Cathy Trozon	251-C Bargy. Pooc I, Silang, Cavite	J.O.B. Photo Center Silang, Cavite

Luzon-Visayas-Mindanao

Wilfredo T. Cabagay Jr.	Provincial Information Ofc., Prov. Capitol, Calapan, Or. Mindoro	Midtown Photo
Cecil M. Cabato	94 Agno, Tayug, Pangasinan	United Trading
Brendo Dela Peña	c/o Picture World Corp., La Purisima, Zamboanga City	Picture World Corp.
Arsenio Garcia	Pob. East, Lamut, Ifugao	Unirank Marketing
Aldrin Gonzales	Araneta St., Bago City, Negros Occidental	Bacolod Color Lab Libertad, Bacolod
Antonio J. Hadap Sr.	1838 Binitayan Darag, Albay	SLT Legaspi
Gomer F. Ibabao	Purok I, San Vicente, Panabo City	Mayfair Photo Center
Benjie Jaime	47 Old San Jose, Dinalupihan, Bataan	Danny's Studio
Susan S. Maligaya	Rizal St., Ginobatan, Albay	Morning Star, Naga City
Fernando M. Miclat	Philex Mining Corp. Padcal, Tuba, Benguet	SF Image Center
Marie Tess Montero	Valencia St., Poblacion, Leganes, Iloilo	Jaro Photo Center
Macrita L. Orquiza	169 B. Bonifacio St., Davao City	FIP-Davao
Luzviminda Pabilona	c/o Helen's Studio, Muyco St., Dingle, Iloilo	YKL-Iloilo
Novelyn Pusilero	01 Gonzaga St., Purok #4, Rizal, Santiago City	Unirank Marketing
Marichell Quinones	Calero, Calapan City	Midtown Photo Center
Allan P. Salvador	Del Pilar St., San Fernando, Camarines Sur	FIS-Naga
Terisita D. Tuazon	San Matias, Sto. Tomas, Pampanga	Multistyle Mktg., San Matias, Pampanga

• 33 winners for Photofinishing/Developing Category

NCR & Region 4

Emmanuel Abcede	41 San Juan I, Gen. Trias, Cavite	Flash Studio
Arlyn A. Alvarado	8 CRM Dolores St., BF Almanza, Las Piñas	FIP-Southmall
Romeo P. Arnaldo	Pantai Timamboc, Camarines Sur	YKL-Naga
Erlinda Castro	1545 - 21 Bo. Sta. Maria, Herran, Paco, Manila	FIP-Megamall
Maricel A. Claudio	Blk 13, Lot 19, Tanag, Antipolo City	Dellin's Portrait
Gemma C. Cruz	c/o Equitable PCI Bank SM Fairview Branch	FIS-SM Fairview
Bonnievie Anne H. delos Reyes	29 Negros St., Bago Bantay, Quezon City	PLM Photo Center
Julio Exconde	Bo. Del Remedio, San Pablo City	Maring's Bazaar
Rose Marie A. Legan	2814 Old Panaderos St., Sta. Ana, Manila	Tampoa Photo Center
Edwin Liwanag	OIS DILG, Camp Crame, Quezon City	FIS-Q. Arcade
Leslie Lustre	41-C Antipolo St., Pasay City	Dimension Photo Center
Vic Manansala	Alangilan, Batangas City	Colormaster
Teodoro Pelaez	1684 Cecilia Maris Village 2, Marcos Hi-way, Antipolo	FIP-Q. Arcade
Aleli C. Sagsagat	8 Bangayngay St., Kaunlaran, Vil., Caloocan City	Spectralab Photo Center
Anita R. Tarinay	1263 Lardizabal St., Sampaloc, Manila	FIS-Fiesta
Gilbert Yu	85 Don Jose St., Quezon City	Fotohaus

Luzon-Visayas-Mindanao

Shalla Gayle Bondoc	3768 3rd St., New Balibago, Angeles City	Cabalen Photo Center
Anthony S. Canobas	Larena Drive, Taclobán, Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental	OK Photo Supply
Alejandro E. de Vera	JC 123 Central Pico, La Trinidad, Benguet	KM-5 Photo Center
Restituto del Rosario	Zone 3, Sibul Spring, San Miguel, Bulacan	Amor Studio
Jeanette Florete	597 Tamsi Alley Perla Makiling, Villamonte, Bacolod	Bacolod Color Lab
Jason A. Formanez	23 E. Aguinaldo St., Kalayaan Vil., San Fernando, Pampanga	Pasillos Enterprises
Lily A. Galamay	San Juan, Delfin Albano, Isabela	1721 Photo Shop
Madoline M. Huenda	179 Sawmill 3, Brgy. Bata, Bacolod City	Clearshot Photo Center
Rosalyn Orplado	P.2 Gahonon Daet, Camarines Norte	Star Studio, Camarines Norte
Fernando T. Pablo	65 Porais, San Jose City, Nueva Ecija	L.A. Photo Center
Mary Ann Palantog	Camp 7, Kalinga Rd., Baguio City	D'Lens Studio
Analiza D Ramellano	Tierra Madre, Tumaga, Zamboanga City	Jocyl Photo Processing
Aurelio H. Rapin	Brgy. #3 Bacarra, Ilocos Norte	Hi-Factor
Corazon B. Rivera	Blk. 4 Lot 29 Phase 5, Bagong Silang, Cutud, Angeles City	Charms Balanga
Debraline C. Ruiz	Ongasan, Loakan, Baguio City	Tampoa Photo Center
Lucena F. Salih	A.H.A.I. Tomaga Zono-RI, Zamboanga City	Jocyl Photo Processing
Jose Tibay	40 Lower Fairview, Baguio City	FIS-Baguio

• 34 winners for the Camera Category

NCR & Region 4

Sheila Q. Araullo	1507 F. Varona St., Tondo, Manila	FIS-Robinson
Gilberto Cagande	31 Datu, Sumakwel, Proj. 4, Cubao, Quezon City	FVJ Photoshop
Lazaro C. Calizo	32-A Blk. A Sto. Nino St., San Francisco Del Monte, QC	YKL Retiro
Rodel B. Cequena	453-B Apitong St., Comembo, Makati City	SM Makati
Joseph Della	19 San Antonio St., Frisco, Quezon City	Diamond Photo
Arlene Galoso	31 Sta. Rosa St., Magallanes Village, Makati City	Wells Photo
Alejandro Hayrosa	196 Rosal St., Payatas A, Quezon City	YKL SM Fairview
Merlinda D. Kasahara	E3 Wencel Santantano, Mataldo, Sucat, Paranaque	SM Southmall (Counter)
Rodolfo Londres	Sal-Fishing Corp. Blk. 8 & 9, Phase 4G, Dagat-dagatan, Malabon	SM Harrison
Estrella A. Macabalo	Blk. 39 Lot 8 P.U.P. Site Escopa III Proj. 4, Quezon City	SM Cubao
Juanita V. Magcayan	Blk. 7 Lot 15, Kaisahan Vil., Bagumbayan, Tanuan City	SM Makati
Aurelio C. Manalo	62 Juan Luna St., Chrysanthemum Village, S.P.L.	Mercian's Studio Lab
Arleine Pojas	428 Daang Bakal St., Mandaluyong City	YKL Q. Plaza
Salve L. Fabillar	404 Tan-agan St., Vulcan 2, Punta, Sta. Ana, Manila	SM Sta. Mesa
Christy San Antonio	280 Cembo Macda, Fort Bonifacio, Makati City	SM Makati
Yeo Sang Hun	FH Manerez Bldg I, 18 Matahimik St., Quezon City	Seam Mool Shop
Luciano M. Santiago	60 Matimtiman St., Teachers Village, Quezon City	Photopia Mdsg.

Luzon-Visayas-Mindanao

Clara C. Base	P. Abad St., Poblacion, Bugallon, Pangasinan	YKL Dagupan
Edna B. Cayao	Brgy. Mabini Cadiz City, Negros Occidental	Clearshot Photo
Aquilino Doromal Jr.	21 Lacson St., Manapla, Negros Occidental	252 Foto Center
Marivic S. Delos Martiaz	San Roque Camaligan, Camarines Sur	YKL-Naga
Nida E. Esclana	Igbaras, Iloilo	YKL Iloilo
Arial Gomez	Botuan, Masbate	Narvic Photo Center
Hambert Goppac	928 Bonifacio Dist., Cabanatuan City	SLT Color Lab Cabanatuan
Mona Liza H. Javelosa	Dr. # 3 Javelosa Apt., Lacson St., B.C.	Injap Ilo-ilo
Rolando R. Manuel	1371 Mercado St., Kabacan Cotabato	Philipps Photo Center
Anilou P. Navarro	Brgy. San Jose, Surigao City	Adedadidi
Geraldine A. Ortiz	Gracia Vill., Urdaneta City	Pop Photo
Leticia Rivera	Philexmine Cor., Baguio City	FIS-Baguio
Ara R. Sangalag	181 Pinili St., Luakan 3, Dinalupihan, Bataan	Danny Studio
Amelia C. Selicia	Purok 7 Lopez Subd., Tugbungan, Zamboanga City	FIS-Baguio
Alma V. Sonio	Brgy. 9 Tumalistis, Calbalogan, Western Samar	Ace Square Photo Center
Agnes R. Zablan	329 San Juan Bautista Betis, Guagua, Pampanga	Guagua Photo Center
Rosanna Basa	307 Tuliao, Sta. Barbara, Pangasinan	SM-Megamall

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Subic to host station to detect nuclear tests

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—Nuclear tests and accidents will be detected from the Philippines through three monitoring stations to be established as part of the global network that will monitor compliance with the comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty (CTBT).

The CTBT prohibits all nuclear weapon test explosions anywhere in the world. Under the CTBT, a preparatory commission based in Vienna, Austria, is establishing the international monitoring system (IMS), a global network consisting of 321 monitoring stations and 80 radio nuclide stations in 90 countries.

The Philippine Nuclear Research Institute said the Philippines is hosting one of 80 radio nuclide stations and two auxiliary seismic stations of 170 seismic monitoring stations in the IMS.

The PNRI has informed the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) of its plan to establish a radio nuclide station in the former American naval base.

An auxiliary seismic station will be put up in Davao City while another will be placed at the disposition of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs).

The PNRI is sending a team to the Subic Bay Freeport this week to gather additional data prior to a survey that would identify the exact site of the radio nuclide station.

The SBMA ecology center said the PNRI has requested that the SBMA provide the site, power and security for the radio nuclide station.

Radio nuclide stations use air samplers to detect radioactive particles released from atmospheric explosions and vented from underground or underwater explosions.

The technology can distinguish between non-nuclear and nuclear explosions.

"Subic is very near the South China Sea, (and) the surrounding areas—like Japan, China and Taiwan—all have nuclear facilities," the PNRI official said.

The IMS is the first and most important component of an elaborate system that would detect nuclear tests anywhere in the world.

IMS monitoring stations can register vibrations from a possible nuclear explosion underground, in the seas and in the air. It could also detect radioactive debris released into the atmosphere.

These stations will transmit, via satellite, the data to the International Data Center (IDC) in Vienna, where the data will be used to detect nuclear tests.

As of now, some 100 stations are transmitting data to the IDC, which began operating in February last year. *Elizabeth Marcelo, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Semirara dump lives, claim Antique folk

By Nestor Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

SAN JOSE, Antique—A multisectoral group opposed to the dumping of Metro Manila's garbage on Semirara Island has asked the Regional Trial Court to cite in contempt the consortium handling the project for violating a court order to stop the dump's construction.

In a July 6 petition filed before Judge Sylvia Jurao of the RTC Branch 10, the United Antiqueños said the consortium D.M. Consunji Inc. (DMCI) and R-II Builders laid a plastic liner on a one-hectare area of the proposed 25-hectare dump.

Jay Pefianco, a convenor of the United Antiqueños, said the laying of the plastic liners violates a preliminary injunction issued by Jurao on Jan. 17.

The court has barred the consortium or "persons acting on their behalf from dumping or causing the dumping of garbage from Metro Manila in the Unong Pit or in any place on Semirara Island" while the case is pending.

The petitioners said "the construction of the plastic liner is an act which is necessary prior to the actual shipment of garbage coming from Metro Manila to the shores of Antique and its eventual dumping in the proposed dump on Semirara Island."

In a phone interview, DMCI legal counsel Roel Pacio said the allegation was "unfounded." He said he would oppose the petition.

The petitioners submitted to the court aerial photographs of the dump, which they claimed, were taken before and after the preliminary injunction was issued.

Black areas in the proposed landfill site were seen in the aerial photographs supposedly taken on May 4. But these were not present in the aerial photographs taken on Jan. 6.

"By comparing the photographs, it is very clear that there is ongoing construction of the plastic liner intended to be used as a dump in open mockery of the writ of preliminary injunction," the petition said.

Henry Frangue, 25, Sangguniang Kabataan municipal federation president of Caluya, told the INQUIRER that the United Antiqueños took the aerial photographs after receiving reports from residents in April that construction was going on in the tightly guarded dump.

Pacio said the pictures did not prove that they violated the court order.

"I believe the black areas shown in the pictures are plastic liners but I am sure there has been no construction activity after the preliminary injunction was handed down," Pacio said.

He said the pictures presented by the United Antiqueños bore no dates.

"How can they prove that these were taken on the dates they are claiming (that the pictures were taken)?" Pacio said.

He said the pictures were taken "long ago," at the height of protests against the project early this year.

Pacio said there was no need to continue the construction because the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) had already scrapped the project.

The MMDA contracted last year the DMCI and R-II Builders consortium to build the dump at a cost of P1.4 billion after the San Mateo landfill was closed Dec. 31 last year.

The 5,500-hectare Semirara Island, one of the nine islands comprising Caluya town, is home to the DMCI-owned Semirara Coal Corp. (SCC), the biggest coal mine in Asia that has been operating on the island for more than 20 years.

MILF leader slain

COTABATO CITY—A suspected leader of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front was killed by gunmen who were avenging the death of a relative in Midsayap town.

Abdul Tayuan, alias Commander Big, was killed after his group clashed with relatives of Ismael Mangkiang, barangay secretary of Ulandang Village on Wednesday morning.

Some 100 families were forced to evacuate the village early yesterday.

Army Maj. Julieto Ando, spokesperson of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, said Tayuan's group executed Mangkiang for still unknown reasons.

In Digos City, the provincial police command in a report said two MNLF guerrillas were slain after an encounter with Army troopers in Sitio Panigbao, Camalian, Jose Abad Santos town last week.

Supt. Guillermo Lara, police provincial director, identified the slain rebels as Rudy Ampan and Almendras Budiang.

The two belonged to the group of Mandy Badiang, who refuses to honor the September 1996 peace agreement between the MNLF and the government. *Edwin Fernandez and Allan Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Number of workers who lost jobs in Central Luzon doubles

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga—At least 8,282 workers lost their jobs in Central Luzon during the first six months of the Macapagal administration, exceeding by almost 100 percent the number of workers reported displaced during the same period last year.

These figures were 96.49 percent higher than the 4,215 workers who became jobless when 108 establishments either closed shop or retrenched workers in the first six months of last year.

Figures on the current unemployment rate in Central Luzon, a region north of Metro Manila and host to the country's two biggest economic zones, are under review by the National Statistics Office.

The DOLE, however, estimated that nearly 400,000 of Central Luzon's more than 2 million laborers lost their jobs last year.

Since January, at least 32 of 138 financially troubled firms opted to close while the rest reduced their workforce permanently or temporarily.

At least 52 of the troubled companies were based in the Clark Special Economic Zone in Pampanga, Subic Bay Freeport Zone in Zambales, Bataan Economic Zone in Bataan and the Luisita Industrial Park in Tarlac.

Most, or 3,397, of the displaced workers came from Pampanga. Bulacan came second with 2,289 displaced workers and Bataan third with 1,773.

DOLE regional chief Ana Dione said most of the troubled firms, especially those operating in economic zones, were into information technology and electronics.

Several legislators and militant labor unions had proposed a P125 legislated increase in daily wages.

The demand was immediately rejected by business groups, warning that a legislated wage increase that high could lead to more shops closing and more workers losing their jobs.

Some business groups had expressed willingness to study the wage increase proposal, but rejected the idea of increasing daily wages by P125.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

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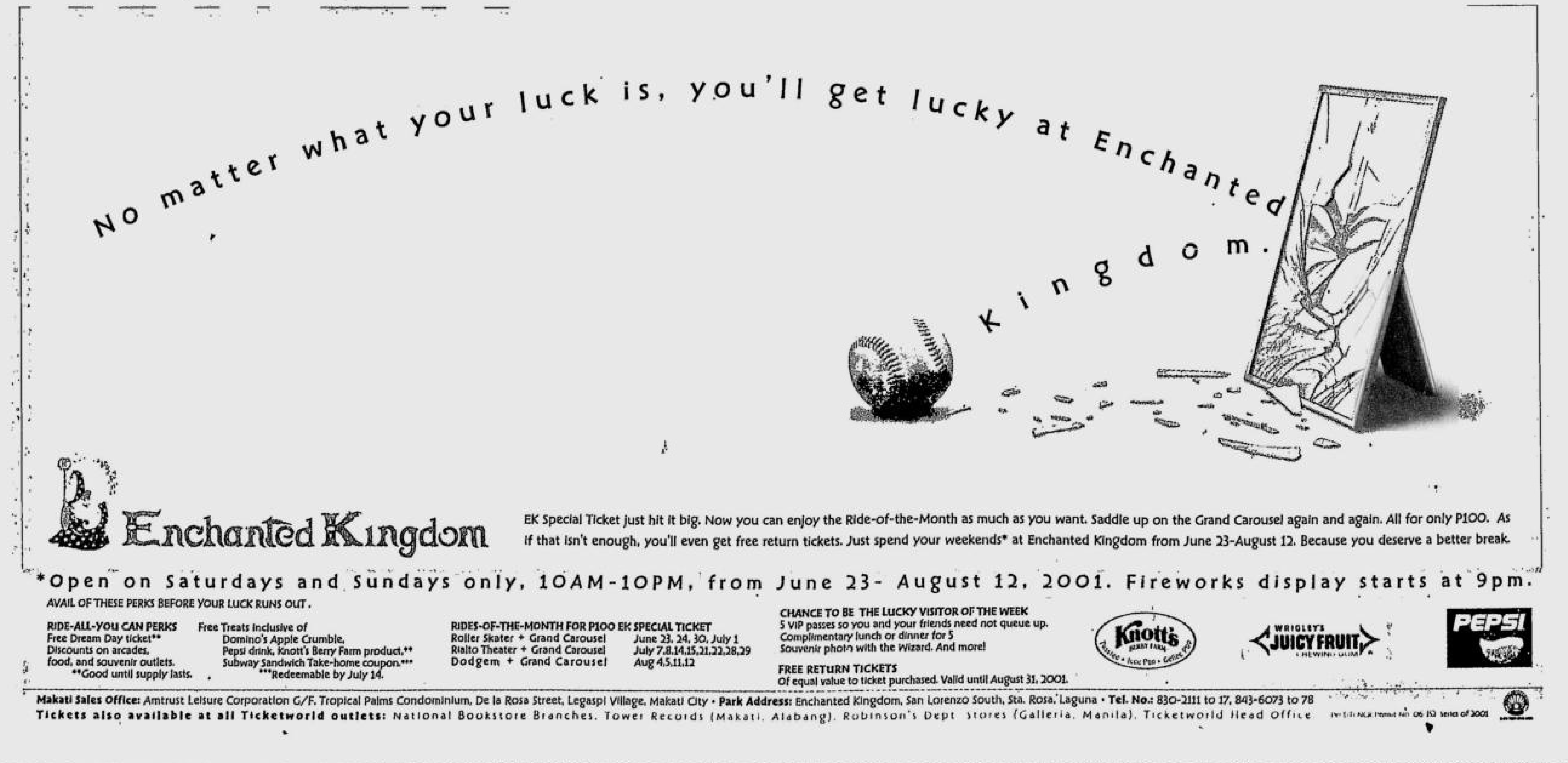

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Sex, lies and blackmail: Plot thickens

(From page A1)

were talking almost daily."

But several people, including another congressman, expressed interest in having not one but two vetoed telecom franchise bills recalled through Malacañang channels, Claudio told the INQUIRER.

Mike Arroyo never approached him to ask about the bills, Claudio said.

2 firms, 1 owner

One bill would have granted a franchise to the Philippine Communication Clearinghouse Inc. (PCCI), owned by a businessman named Pacifico Marcelo, to operate a clearinghouse through which telecom companies would interconnect for a fee.

Another related bill would have granted a second firm, APC Wireless Interface Network Inc., a franchise to construct a wireless telecommunication system nationwide.

Claudio said APC was apparently owned by Jaime Dichaves, a close friend of ex-President Joseph Estrada.

It is not clear whether APC Wireless is connected to the APC Group owned by prominent businessman Willy Ocier, also an Estrada ally. The APC Group, a subsidiary of Belle Corp., is an equity owner of Philcom (Philippine Global Communications Inc.), one of the country's leading providers of international long-distance services.

A company source confirmed that Marcelo is the majority owner of both APC Wireless and PCCI. Both companies also have common directors.

Transportation and Communications Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez said that he has already asked his staff to investigate whether APC and PCCI have the same incorporators.

"I want to know whether or not they are owned by the same people," he said.

Alvarez believes that Jaime Dichaves owns PCCI.

"Pacifico Marcelo is one of Dichaves' friends. I still believe Dichaves owns the company," he told the INQUIRER in a phone interview yesterday.

Former Palace Secretary Veronica "Bing" Rodrigo, who accused Arroyo and three of his friends of accepting money in connection with the franchise deal, also said Dichaves owned the telecom firm.

PCCI: No dummy

But PCCI finally issued a statement yesterday to deny that its majority owner, Marcelo, was fronting for Dichaves, the businessman who claimed to be the real Jose Velarde, Estrada's alleged alias for holding secret bank accounts.

Telecommunications franchises are secured through an act by Congress, signed by the President.

Congressmen approved the House bills on Feb. 6 while senators approved their versions on Feb. 5, Claudio said.

The PLLO transmitted the enrolled bill on the clearinghouse to the President on March 21, and transmitted the APC bill on March 30.

Ms Macapagal vetoed the first bill on April 18, and the APC bill on April 27.

When the bills were vetoed, PCCI wrote President Macapagal a letter requesting her to reconsider her decision, according to a company statement.

"We also wanted to get clarification on why the bill was vetoed. We also gave Congress a copy of this letter," a company source said.

The firm said in its statement that it respected Ms Macapagal's decision to not reconsider her veto.

Congressman

Claudio said he told those who inquired about the status of the reconsideration requests that only Congress can override a veto.

The veto turned into a controversy last week when Arroyo went on air after text messages spread saying that he had received P50 million in exchange for the recall of the bills. The First Gentleman said he had heard that a resigned Palace secretary worked for the recall of the veto.

Bing Rodrigo, who had by then resigned as the President's correspondence secretary, then accused Arroyo and three of his friends of accepting money in connection with the telecom franchise bill.

The congressman who inquired about the status of the reconsideration request was former Romblon Rep. Eleandro Jesus Madrona, Claudio said.

In the 11th Congress, Madrona was the chair of the powerful committee on accounts, vice chair of the committee on legislative franchises and vice chair of the transportation and communications committee.

Claudio described Madrona's inquiry as "matter-of-fact."

"Congressman Madrona also asked me about that, the status of the veto and I explained why it was vetoed," Claudio said in a telephone interview.

Clueless

Bing Rodrigo escorted DOTC consultant Malou Nuñez to his office for a meeting on June 4, Claudio said.

Claudio said that when Rodrigo arranged the meeting, she could not explain why Nuñez wanted to meet him.

"She was unable to tell me (what it was about). She was just asking for help on some problem that she said she didn't understand," Claudio said.

During the meeting Rodrigo did not say a word, and only Nuñez inquired about the franchise bills.

"Nuñez said she was with the DOTC and said she was a friend of Marcelo . . . She inquired about the status of the veto and request for reconsideration that came from Congress itself," Claudio said.

"It was the first and last time, and Rodrigo never followed up the matter," he added.

Blackmail?

Alvarez said that Nuñez, a former DOTC employee, was Dichaves' contact in the department.

Alvarez has notified National Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco that Nuñez was blackmailing him.

He believes Nuñez is in Dichaves' group because he said she even threatened to slap him with sexual harassment charges if he did not intervene in favor of PCCI.

"They wanted to scare me in the hope that I would compromise. She blackmailed me," he said.

"But it's not a formal complaint because Nuñez herself hasn't issued any formal statement," he said.

"It isn't part of her duties as DOTC Action Center coordinator to follow up the status of franchise requests. We're not even supposed to do that here," he said.

Alvarez also said somebody called his office once regarding the franchises, so he asked one of his staff members to meet with this person.

"They wanted me to push for the reconsideration of the bill," he said.

Alvarez refused to disclose the identity of the caller, saying that "the timing is not yet right."

'Mrs. Araneta'

Another person who inquired about the status of reconsideration request with the PLLO was a woman who identified herself as "Mrs. Araneta," Claudio said.

Araneta, according to Claudio, went to his office in Malacañang on June 14 and introduced herself as a stockholder of APC.

"She said her fellow owners were breathing down her neck," Claudio said.

He said he met with the woman but called in several of his staff to witness the conversation.

"I told her the same thing that I told Nuñez, that the basis of the veto was a recommendation from the DOTC, and that there was no way to have it recalled as only Congress can override a veto," Claudio said.

"It would be awkward and improper for the President to reconsider it," he added.

On inquiry

Justice Secretary Perez told reporters that a Senate investigation might be uncalled for since the veto had not been recalled.

"*Parang hindi* logical. Why would (Arroyo) receive money when the bill is still vetoed?" he said.

Perez issued the statement after the Senate minority bloc said it was gathering evidence to probe allegations that Arroyo received P50 million.

Senate Minority Floor Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said an investigation was imperative since the controversy "involves (allegations of) multimillion-peso (bribes given to) the husband of the most powerful person in the land."

Pimentel said that once the minority bloc establishes that there is sufficient evidence to warrant an inquiry, the Senate blue ribbon committee should start tackling the issue.

Sen. Ralph Recto said administration senators would not block an investigation.

"Mr. Arroyo should face the music. He has to appear before the blue ribbon panel," he said.

Asking Sotto

Administration senators have asked a colleague in the opposition to explain what he knows about PCCI.

Apparently turning the tables on the minority bloc, People Power Coalition senators pointed out that it was Sen. Vicente Sotto's public services committee which reviewed the franchise of the telecommunications firm that allegedly bribed Arroyo.

Administration senators want to zero in on who really owns PCCI.

"Senator Sotto should make public whether the stockholders are dummies," Senate President Franklin Drilon told the INQUIRER.

He explained that as head of the panel in the 11th Congress, Sotto was tasked to review the ownership of the clearinghouse company.

In a separate interview, Recto also said that it was important for the public to know who really owns the company.

"We should also look into the ownership issue because if anyone gave a bribe, it should be the owner of the company," he said.

"Is Marcelo willing to testify that he bribed Arroyo?" he asked.

'No monopoly'

Sotto was not available for comment, but in a press statement, he admitted going over the PCCI franchise, but denied that it would create a monopoly.

"The franchise application of PCCI is an alternative way for other telecommunication companies to interconnect with each other. It is not mandatory for them to pass through the system but rather, a mere option to interconnect the more economical way. I can't understand how it will create a monopoly," he said.

A source familiar with PCCI operations told the INQUIRER that the company was actually surprised that the franchise bill was vetoed, because "the bill itself contained standard telecommunications franchise provisions and did not authorize the setting up of a clearinghouse."

The source did admit that setting up a clearinghouse was part of the company's business plan had they gotten the franchise.

"Our franchise was only to allow us to build our own telecom network which we would eventually use for the clearinghouse," the source said.

But the clearinghouse would not require all telecommunications companies to interconnect through it, the source said.

"It merely gives the (telecommunications) industry players an alternative to interconnecting one-on-one with each other," the source claimed. ***With a report from Armand Nocum***

Mayon does it again

(From page A1)

was covered in an inch of volcanic ash, impairing visibility in some areas in Legazpi and the nearby towns of Daraga and Santo Domingo.

Residents said it was the first time since Mayon's 1984 eruption that volcanic ash showered on Legazpi and settled on rooftops, vehicles and streets.

Motorists on the highways and main roads in the eastern part of the province had to switch on their headlights and hazard lights and slow down to a snail's pace as they made their way through swirling clouds of ash.

Some residents of areas well beyond the declared danger zone joined the confused throng that made a beeline for evacuation centers.

Those who had earlier left the centers to tend to crops and homes damaged by last month's eruptions again abandoned their farms using any available means of transportation.

"It's good that I had just harvested my tomatoes. But the string beans are about ready for harvest too," said Esteban Abellano, who tills a piece of land on the southeast slope of the volcano.

Tens of thousands of residents carrying little more than pieces of clothing fled to safe grounds in pushcarts, cars, jeepneys, buses, and dump and gravel trucks provided by private owners and government agencies.

Others wrapped themselves in blankets and fled on foot.

The Armed Forces' Joint Task Force Mayon under Col. Dante Bonifacio initially sent 12 vehicles to evacuate residents.

Lethal flows

Superheated lava and pyroclastic debris rolled down Mayon's slopes, including the Bonga, Buyuan and Basud gullies in the south and southeast portions.

The lethal flows reached up to 5.5 kilometers from the summit.

One flow has been detected 1 kilometer from the populated area of the Maninila gully in the town of Guinobatan, according to Mayor Christopher Flores.

Laguerta said that since Wednesday morning, Phivolcs had noted a series of tremors and lava flows, accompanied by falling rocks, from the summit crater.

"These were clear manifestations of an impending explosive eruption," he said.

Laguerta said authorities had recommended the immediate evacuation of residents of Mabinit, Bonga, Buyuan and Matanag, villages within the danger zone facing Mayon's eastern slope. The residents of villages facing the eastern quadrant were put on standby status.

LARRY FERNANDEZ/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

DASHING for shelter, residents of Barangay Buyuan, Legazpi City, take to the streets as ash clouds billow out of Mayon.

Yesterday's eruption endangered a wider swath—the towns of Guinobatan, Camalig, Daraga, Santo Domingo and Malilipot, as well as the cities of Ligao, Tabaco and Legazpi in the east and southeast.

Ernesto Corpuz, Phivolcs chief of instruments, said the volume of pyroclastic materials last emitted by Mayon was estimated at 10-15 million cubic meters.

The eruptions on June 24 and 29 deposited a slightly heavier volume of pyroclastic materials on the volcano's slopes.

Corpuz said the real danger to life and property was posed by pyroclastic flows.

"These have the potential to kill instantly, unlike volcanic ash, which is more of a nuisance than a threat to life," he said.

Corpuz pointed out that precise measurements of the volume of pyroclastic debris would be hard to make in the absence of ocular inspections and surveys.

He warned that more explosive eruptions should be expected within the week.

Disaster officials advised residents to wear dust masks and sweep off ash from rooftops. They warned that the ash could accumulate quickly and cause houses to collapse.

No deaths

Cedric Daep, head of the Provincial Public Safety and Emergency Management Office (PPSEMO), said no deaths or injuries had been reported as of midday yesterday.

"The eruption was louder than the eruption last time," he said. "There were parts (of the province) that were too dark, some villages where there was zero visibility."

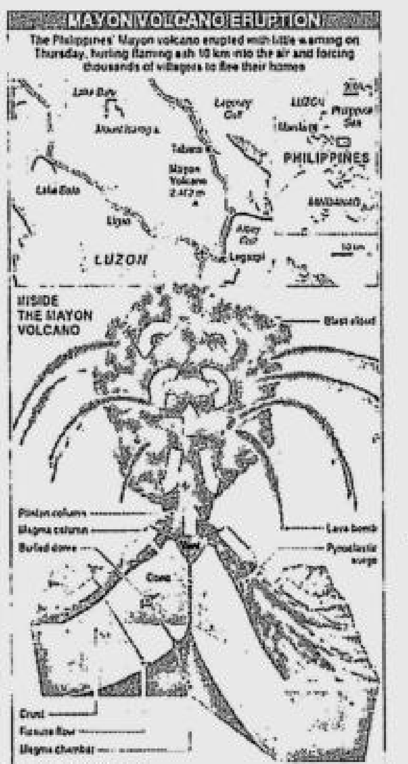
Daep said that hours before the eruption, he had made contact with the mayors and their respective disaster coordinating councils, on the instruction of Gov. Al Francis Bichara, to prepare for the immediate evacuation of residents in the endangered areas.

He said the instruments for mass evacuation had been on standby.

Bichara appealed for calm and immediately called the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council to a meeting.

"We were surprised by Mayon's sudden explosion," Agence France Presse quoted Legazpi Mayor Noel Rosal as saying.

"We were told to evacuate last night, but we did not know it would explode so fast. We could see bright lava flows as early as last night," he said.



MAYON VOLCANO ERUPTION

The Philippines' Mayon volcano erupted with little warning on Thursday, hurling flaming ash 10 km into the air and forcing thousands of villagers to flee their homes

REUTERS

Rosal said disaster officials quickly evacuated people from the danger zone.

Military trucks rolled into the endangered areas and ferried villagers into evacuation centers, while the Air Force put two helicopters on standby to augment rescue operations, Agence France Presse reported.

The Task Force Mayon, backed by Army reservists, again served to coordinate evacuation and related efforts.

The PPSEMO recommended the suspension of all activities within the danger zone and warned residents beyond it to stand by for evacuation should eruptions intensify.

The Daraga Municipal Council has authorized Mayor Gerry Jaucian to use the town's emergency fund for evacuation expenses.

The Office of Civil Defense said all flights to and from Legazpi had been suspended.

Mayon last exploded on June 23, displacing 46,039 villagers. It continued to be restless until July 4, when authorities began sending evacuees back to their homes.

The volcano's most destructive eruption was in 1814, when 1,200 people were killed and an entire town was buried in volcanic mud. ***With reports from AFP, Cynthia D. Balana***

'War room' . . .

(From page A1)

Tiglao said Malacañang welcomed the creation of the oversight committee in the House.

"We welcome the Congress initiative. It's a form of pressure for the entire government to accomplish the targets they've set," he said.

Tiglao said the media would be given regular briefings on the progress being made on each of the targets.

"We aim to report on a regular basis the progress on the targets. The President's aim (in creating the war room) is to show the people how the targets are being met and if we are on schedule," he said.

Tiglao said weekly updates would be posted on the President's website in 45 to 60 days so that anybody with access to the Internet could check on the progress of the President's commitments.

INQUIRER columnist Amando Doronila wrote in his column last Wednesday that one "fatal flaw" in the President's targets was the absence of a "war room" for monitoring purposes.

Tiglao also took on opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara for his "contra-Sona" critical of Ms Macapagal's first major policy speech.

The presidential spokesperson said Angara's "contra-Sona" showed that the opposition wanted the economy to collapse because it was not in power.

"What apparently sets the theme of the contra-Sona is not a criticism of the (President's) Sona but the fervent wish of the opposition or Senator Angara for this economy to collapse. They are saying that since they are not in power, this economy should collapse," Tiglao said.

Tiglao said Angara even missed the symbolism of the paper boats made by Payatas children Jomar Pabalan, Jason Vann Banogan and Erwin Dolera that Ms Macapagal cited at the beginning of her Sona.

"It's a very disappointing contra-Sona. In the first place, Senator Angara even got the symbolism wrong. The idea of a paper boat is a universal symbol in Asia. Paper boats are a symbol of hope for the future because they are made by children," Tiglao said.

Msgr. 'Soc' now a bishop

(From page A1)

the Edsa Shrine was built 11 years ago, he was named its rector. He also serves as minister of the Ministry for Youth Affairs of the Manila Archdiocese.

The Edsa Shrine was established to memorialize the first People Power Revolt. The shrine was the site of People Power II. And Villegas was a moving force behind the scenes. Villegas has been cited as one of the real heroes of Edsa II. He maintained a patient, prayerful and forgiving presence during the five-day occupation of his shrine by supporters of deposed President Joseph Estrada who mounted what they called Edsa III.

Wept

Villegas wept as he recounted during a prayer vigil how the pro-Estrada hordes "desecrated" the "holy ground" with their obscene songs and acts of vandalism. Shortly after the Estrada loyalists left the shrine last May 1, the rector himself led the cleanup of the place.

At the height of the banning of the controversial movie "Live Show," President Macapagal-Arroyo called him up to seek the cardinal's advice on the fate of then Movie and Television Review and Classification Board chair Nick Tiongson.

The President said it was Villegas who advised her to do what she pleases with Tiongson, whom the cardinal had recommended to the MTRCB post. While the President's disclosure earned the ire of her critics for allegedly allowing the Church to meddle in secular affairs, groups opposed to the showing of the movie hailed Villegas for his position.

TOYM awardee

In 2000, Monsignor Villegas received the coveted Ten Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) award for community development given by the Philippine Jaycees. An author of five books on homilies, prayers and reflections, he was given the Catholic Authors Awards by the Asian Catholic Publishers Inc. in 1994.

He also serves as member of the College of Consultors, vicar general of the Archdiocese of Manila, and the district head of the Ecclesiastical District of Quezon City-South.

He was also executive coordinator of the Commission for the World Youth Day 1995 in Manila.

Ordained priest on Oct. 5, 1985 by Cardinal Sin, Father Soc, as he is fondly called, was appointed papal chaplain of Paul John Paul II in 1991, earning the title "monsignor."

Bishop Villegas' Episcopal ordination is set on Aug. 31, 9 a.m. at the Manila Cathedral in Intramuros, which will coincide with the birthday of the cardinal.

Private parts, public scandal

(From page A1)

argument over who had the larger private parts.

The scene, with two men nearly coming to blows, happened not in a soap opera, but in the office of the Sandiganbayan's third division where pre-trial proceedings in the plunder case against former President Joseph Estrada took place yesterday.

Estrada lawyer Raymond Fortun called Miguel Silos, a young lawyer helping the prosecution, "*sinungaling* (liar)."

Silos shot back, shouting "*bakla* (fag)" at Fortun.

Silos also repeatedly shouted "faggot, faggot."

So Fortun dared the young lawyer to display each other's "manhood."

Fortun said his "manhood" was probably bigger than Silos'.

Silos then called Fortun an "asshole" and cursed him: "*P___ng ina mo* (You son of a bitch)."

Fortun cursed him back.

Cooler heads prevailed in the end and prevented the two from tearing each other apart.

It happened after the second closed-door stipulation of facts in the plunder case, where both the defense and the prosecution had to agree on the facts of the case.

Silos, a volunteer lawyer from the Carpio, Villaraza and Cruz law office, was questioned by defense lawyer Cleofe Verzola as to why he was inside the room.

Verzola said Silos had refused to enter his appearance, and would not readily give his name. She claimed that only the public prosecutors and the defense lawyers were allowed inside the room.

When Silos left the room, she slammed the door after him. She later claimed that she did not intentionally slam the door, but that there was something wrong with the door's hinge.

Private assisting counsels led by Arno Sanidad were outside the room. He wanted to know why private assisting counsels were not being allowed inside.

After about 20 minutes, at 4:10 p.m., the defense lawyers and prosecutors streamed out of the room without agreeing on the stipulation of facts.

Again, defense lawyers questioned Silos' presence. Verzola and Fortun claimed that Silos did not make a proper appearance.

Silos then said that he had tried to explain why he was there and that he had given them his name.

That's when Fortun called Silos a liar.

Staff members of the Sandiganbayan who witnessed the incident were shocked.

They said the lawyers conducted themselves shamefully.

But Silos said he would not apologize for his behavior. He clarified that he was not there in the court office to represent his law office, Carpio, Villaraza and Cruz.

Fortun said the incident was "very regrettable."

"We are professionals," he said. And he said it with a straight face.

The Sandiganbayan yesterday remanded back to the Ombudsman the illegal use of alias case filed against Estrada in court, ordering the Ombudsman to conduct a new preliminary investigation.

The court said Estrada should be accorded a new preliminary investigation because the Ombudsman has amended the information in the case.

It said that in the original information, the Ombudsman was only referring to one incident, an alleged Equitable bank transaction, where Estrada allegedly used the name Jose Velarde.

It said that considerations of fairness and due process "demand that a new preliminary investigation be conducted with the view to sufficiently inform" the accused of whatever additional evidence on the matter of use of alias had been submitted.

The court said this would afford Estrada the right to present countervailing evidence.

OUSTED Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid and his wife Sinta Nuriah enter a car as they leave the presidential palace Thursday on their way to the airport for their flight to the United States. REUTERS

'I will return,' Wahid tells supporters

(From page A1)

Parliament or the judiciary.

His departure came just hours after the legislature elected a conservative Muslim politician, Hamzah Haz, as the new vice president.

In an interview with The Associated Press and several other news media Thursday—his last before leaving the palace—Wahid said he had turned down an offer by Megawati to see him off at the airport, saying her ascension to the presidency was illegal.

Wahid said he would be one of the few voices for democracy in Megawati's Indonesia, which he said will be ruled by the army and the forces of corruption.

"I am painting a gloomy picture," he said in his office in the presidential palace.

Wahid—who is nearly blind after suffering two strokes in recent years—earlier said his doctors had recommended that he travel abroad to seek medical treatment for his high blood pressure, which has been aggravated by stress.

The vice presidential ballot came after much infighting between the country's political and military elites, who are jockeying for the top Cabinet posts in Megawati's new government in moves that are raising concern about Megawati's commitment to democratic reform.

Megawati is Indonesia's third president since the 1998 fall of former dictator Suharto, who ruled the country with an iron fist for 32 years. She is the daughter of Sukarno, Indonesia's founding president.

The country has had little success in consolidating democratic institutions in the three years since Suharto's demise.

Haz

Haz, 61, is the leader of the United Development Party and a former minister in Wahid's first Cabinet in October 1999.

He resigned from the government the following month after allegations of corruption.

The balloting for vice president, which lasted 12 hours and was spread over two days, was marred by allegations of vote buying.

Normally, votes in the chamber are tabulated electronically in a matter of seconds.

Legislators added nicknames to candidates' names on official ballot papers, which were then counted by hand and read out loud.

Lawmaker Irwan Prayitno said the practice enabled candidates and their supporters to buy votes by keeping tabs on who was honoring promises to cast ballots for specific candidates, with the nicknames serving as secret codes, the state news agency Antara reported.

Judge killed

On Thursday, two men on motorbikes shot and killed an Indonesian judge who last year sentenced Suharto's youngest son to 18 months in jail for corruption, police said.

Syaifuddin Kartasasita, 61, was shot five times at close range through the window of his car as he drove to his office in central Jakarta, said national police spokesperson Maj. Gen. Didi Widayadi.

Kartasasita was the presiding Supreme Court judge who sentenced Tommy Suharto on Sept. 22 for his part in a multimillion-dollar land scam. *AP*

It's a baby boy for Sipadan couple

(From page A1)

FILE PHOTO

SOUTH African couple Callie and Monique Strydom spent four months in the hinterlands of Jolo as captives of the Abu Sayyaf. Now they have Luc.

"Everything is fine with both the mother and the little baby. We can't wait to have them both back at home," Suzette said.

The birth of their first son was a happy ending to the story of the Strydoms, who were among those kidnapped by the Abu Sayyaf by boat on April 23 last year from a luxury resort on Sipadan Island in Malaysia, and then taken to Jolo.

They were released more than four months later, after Libyan negotiators brokered a deal. Soon after their release, Monique announced the pregnancy.

A manager of the Sandton Medi Clinic, where the 3.08-kilogram baby was born, told SABC radio that "both mother and child are doing well at the moment."

In earlier reports, Callie Strydom, 37, said his and his wife's release had not only reunited families but also proved that races came together in South Africa in times of conflict.

"It has been very touching because black people from South Africa were working to release white hostages," he said, adding:

"It was a really emotional moment because it was kind of a reversed situation from when white people ruled South Africa" until the end of the racist apartheid system a few years ago.

The release of the Strydoms and other Western hostages was negotiated by the Gadhafi International Charitable Foundation, run by Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi's son Seif Al-Islam.

In reports, negotiators in the Philippines were quoted as saying that Gadhafi paid $1 million for each hostage. But Libya denied this, and insisted that the hostages were freed in exchange for the promise of development projects in the Philippines.

After their release, the Strydoms and the other freed hostages—a German man and three Frenchwomen—traveled to Tripoli for a 75-minute "welcome ceremony" wherein the Libyan government was extolled.

The trip was officially voluntary, but it was widely believed that the ex-hostages' governments agreed to it in exchange for Libya's help.

Last May 27, another faction of the Abu Sayyaf abducted Filipino and American tourists from the Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan and took them by boat to Basilan. Of the original group of 20, four, including an American couple, are still being held hostage by the bandits along with other Filipino captives. *With an AFP report*

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
KAGAWARAN NG EDUKASYON, KULTURA AT ISPORTS
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS
DECS Complex, Meralco Avenue
Pasig City, Philippines

Sama-Sama Sa DECS

Invitation for Bids

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines has entered into Loan Agreement 4535 with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) in various currencies for the financing of the Social Expenditure Management Project (SEMP). It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the following contracts for supply and delivery of school furniture to public elementary and secondary schools in the country.

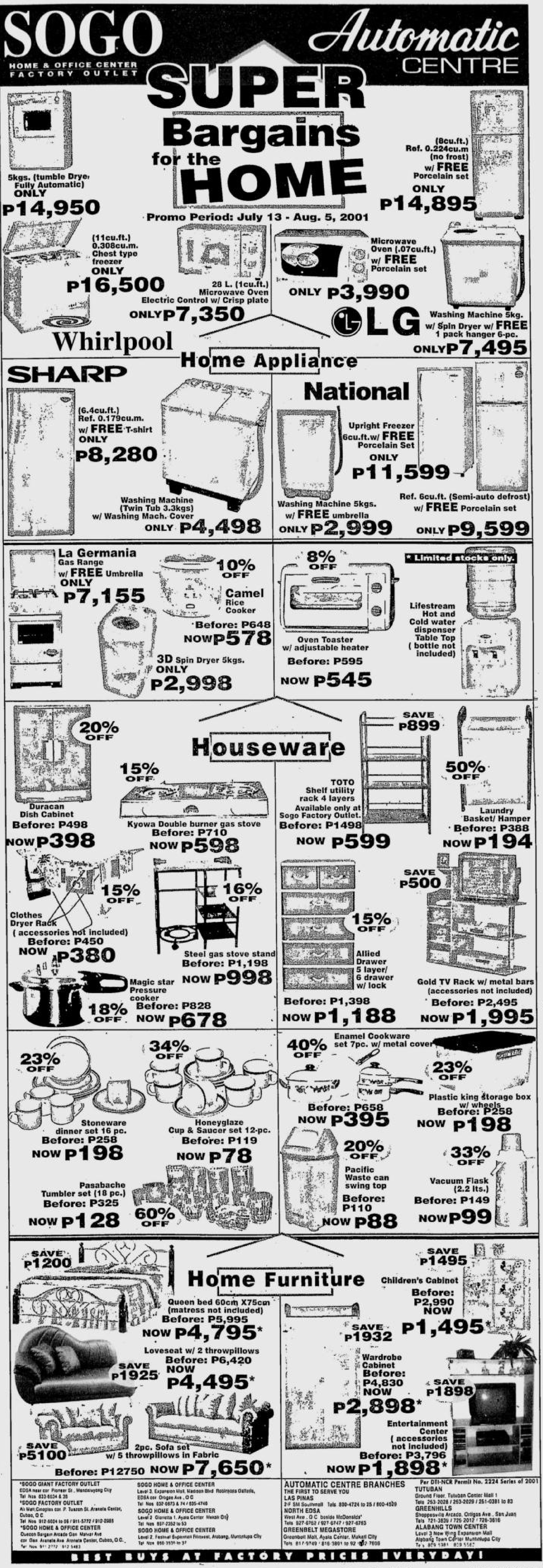
List of contracts/package (Quantity)

Location	Elementary School Furniture	Secondary School Furniture
Region I	Lot 1 (1,561)	Lot 2 (3,632)
Region II	Lot 3 (6,847)	Lot 4 (6,151)
Region III	Lot 5 (3,076)	Lot 6 (5,807)
Region IV	Lot 7 (20,361)	Lot 8 (16,098)
Region V	Lot 9 (13,421)	Lot 10 (8,748)
Region VI	Lot 11 (15,628)	Lot 12 (13,601)
Region VII	Lot 13 (13,578)	Lot 14 (11,065)
Region VIII	Lot 15 (9,614)	Lot 16 (7,489)
Region IX	Lot 17 (8,939)	Lot 18 (6,082)
Region X	Lot 19 (8,503)	Lot 20 (5,209)
Region XI	Lot 21 (14,402)	Lot 22 (9,644)
Region XII	Lot 23 (8,411)	Lot 24 (6,639)
CARAGA	Lot 25 (6,719)	Lot 26 (5,056)
NCR	Lot 27 (15,242)	Lot 28 (19,727)

2. The Department of Education, Culture and Sports through the DECS BAC (Bids and Awards Committee) now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply and delivery of school furniture to public elementary and secondary schools.
3. For the purpose of this bid, eligible bidders shall be those who have experience in the supply or selling and distribution or delivery of school furnitures.
4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from and inspect the bidding documents at Bids and Awards Committee-Foreign Assisted Projects (BAC-FAPs), G/F Rizal Building II, DECS Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City with Telephone Nos.: 635-3762 and 631-1361 loc. 2085.
5. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders on completion of an application form from BAC-FAPs and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000). The bidding documents will be made available at the BAC-FAPs starting **July 30, 2001.**
6. The provisions in the Instruction to Bidders and in the General Conditions of Contract are the provisions of the World Bank *Standard Bidding Documents: Procurement of Goods.*
7. Sealed bids, together with the bid security of not less than two and one half percent (2.5%) of the total bid amount must be delivered to Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Building, DECS Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City on or before 10:00 AM, **September 11, 2001.**
8. Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend at 10:00 AM on **September 11, 2001** at Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Building, DECS Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City.
9. Prior to Bid Opening, a Pre-Bid Conference will be held at the address stated in paragraph 8 at **10:00 AM on August 21, 2001.**
10. The BAC-FAPs reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality therein and award the packages to one or more bidder(s).

(Sgd.) **ERNESTO S. PANGAN**
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee
Foreign Assisted Projects (BAC-FAPs)

(PDI -- July 27, 28 & 29, 2001)



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Del Rosario, Dee post perfect feats

RIDER of the Year: 1. Paul del Rosario 240 pts. 2. Carlo Baltao 228 pts. 3. John Dee 221 pts. 4. Rene Pamaran 209 pts.

SUBIC—Defending champion Paul del Rosario and John Dee shared honors as they posted perfect feats last weekend in the second leg of the 2001 Petron National Jetsports Series at the Waterfront Beach here.

It was the second perfect feat in this series for Del Rosario, who immediately stepped on the gas and pulled a wide margin over his rivals to rule the premiere Expert Runabout Super Stock 1200 over second placer James Baltao and Carlo Baltao.

The victory also fortified his bid for a "threepeat" crown as he now holds solo leadership with a total of 240 points in this series sponsored by Petron Corp. and WG&A Super Ferry.

Dee, the 1998 champion, flashed his old form in the Expert Runabout 785-1200 class where he eclipsed Del Rosario and James Baltao to move third overall for the coveted Rider of the Year award.

Two riders from Pagadian City—Rene Pamaran and Ferdinand Pulmones—likewise hugged the limelight with their convincing triumphs in their respective classes.

Pamaran held his fort throughout the 12-lap race to upset erstwhile leader Carlo Baltao and third placer Ben Sun Que in the Expert Runabout Super Stock division.

Pulmones warded off the strong challenge from Harley David and Excel Torres to win the Novice and Veterans race which is fast becoming a favorite, luring a total of 12 participants.

Badminton: World champions coming

THE WORLD'S best badminton players will bring their act in the country when the $150,000 JVC Asian Badminton Championships heats up on Aug. 21-26 at the Philsports Arena in Pasig City.

China's Gao Ling and Huang Sui, the world's No.1 in ladies doubles, will join Olympic silver medalist Hendrawan Gunawan of Indonesia in vying for the top honors in the event which offers a top purse of $11,000 for men's singles and $7,500 in the distaff side.

Ling's partner in bagging the Sydney Olympic gold in mixed doubles, Zhang Jun, and Indonesia's Tony Gunawan and Halim Haryanto are also installed as heavy favorites.

They will be crowded by other entries from 14 more countries including Chinese-Taipei, Hong Kong, Iran, Japan, Maldives and Myanmar.

Local bets Ian Piencenaves, Melvin Llanes, Arolas Amahit and Jaime Junio will don the national colors in the tournament organized by the Asian Badminton Confederation, the Philippine Badminton Association and the International Management Group.

Focus, however, will be on siblings Kennie and Kennevic Asuncion, who are currently honing their skills in China. They topped last month's JVC Open Badminton Championships held at the Glorietta.

A whopping $13,000 awaits the men's doubles winner while $7,500 goes to each player in the ladies and mixed doubles.

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SPORTSWATCH

Chess warning

THE NATIONAL Chess Federation of the Philippines yesterday warned chess players against competing in the Philippine Chess Grand Prix set to start tomorrow in Bacolod City. The warning came from Undersecretary Eduardo Soliman Jr., who said that the Department of Interior and Local Governments has nothing to do with the tournament. Organizers of the P2.2 million event have been dropping the names of DILG officials to solicit support from the provinces, a ploy decried by NCFP president Eugene Torre.

RP chessers 2nd

THE PHILIPPINES finished second in the Beijing International Youth Chess tournament held recently in the Chinese capital. The Milo Checkmate team was composed of Gabby Layugan of Ateneo, Emmanuel Emperado of St. James College of Parañaque, Bruce Alfred Reyes of OB Montessori and Rommelle de los Santos of Angelicum. Layugan, 9, was the most impressive as he tied for first with top seed Liu Zheng of Beijing.

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Loaded 2. Iron Lady 3. Sarratoga's Bet/ Dominant Dancer 4. D Contractor 5. Septembermorn
Race 2—1. King Aldrin 2. Howard Huge/Trick Shot 3. Ebony Starr 4. Ayra's Pet 5. Somethnig Different
Race 3—1. Hole in One 2. That's My Tiger 3. Dressed to Impress 4. Duke Mark
Race 4—1. Picture Perfect 2. Tigra 3. Labuyo 4. Simply Great 5. Worth Ur While
Race 5—1. Gold Honors 2. Gracious Heart 3. Terminal Bound 4. Padron Real 5. Call to Action
Race 6—1. Imus Emperor 2. Jhelen 3. Shuttle's Magic 4. Friendly Lover 5. Diamond Star
Race 7—1. Above All 2. Southern Skies 3. Sunny View/Waving Oscar 4.Full Blast/Plus Factor 5. American Beauty
Race 8—1. Earth Angel 2. Go Johnny Go 3. Great Hill 4. Knows Love 5. Chrissy Girl
Race 9—1. Madam Aida 2. Test Run 3. Alleviator 4. Gallant Rose 5. Katya/Friends 6. Boss Lino

Batangas to host Shell kart races

TO SPICE up the competition, the sixth leg of the Shell Super Karting Championships will be held this Sunday, July 29, at the Batangas Racing Circuit in Rosario, Batangas instead of its usual home at the Carmona Racing Circuit in Carmona, Cavite.

The change of venue—from the short and tricky Carmona Circuit to the long and demanding Batangas Circuit—is expected to pose new challenges to the country's top karters.

It will also mark the first time that the Shell-sponsored karting series will be held in Batangas this year.

Carmona hosted the first five legs in the series also sponsored by Shell Helix, Shell Velocity, Shell Citibank Mastercard, Match Box/Hot Wheels, Nokia, Coca-Cola, Bridgestone, Eastway Racing and Demvel's Enterprises. "It will be interesting to see how the karters will cope up with the change of venue," said Lot Tan of Carmona Circuit Phils.

Among the karters to watch this weekend are Pepon Marave, Philip Alvendia, Manuel Mayo, Manuel Sy and Mon Tanjuatco in the centerpiece Formula super A category.

The other notable participants are:

Formula 125/Rotax Challenge—Lee Bumgarner, Angelo Barretto, Juha Roiha, Ramon Hermoso and Bert Neuhof.

Intercon—Allan Uy, Bingo Valero, Marzon Samson, Mario Cunanan and Christian Sotto.

For details, call Carmona Circuit Phils. at tel. 817-2241.

It's go for Menk . . .

(From page A21)

ticing with the Rhummasters in their Quiapo gym. He said Menk's presence today is critical "not only to the team's chances of advancing but also to his teammates' morale."

"Though he's not yet in perfect shape," said Bugia, "his presence will be enough to perk up our team which has suffered these past few conferences."

Winners in this twin playoff will face each other in a best-of-five semifinal series. Defending champion San Miguel Beer and Alaska Milk will figure in a separate semis series after winning over Mobiline and Sta. Lucia Realty, respectively.

Meanwhile, Iloilo Megavoltz's team owner Robert Puckett yesterday said he was willing to go to court to settle his differences with his erstwhile star player Vince Hizon regarding the player's unpaid salary worth P7.4 million.

Puckett initially offered a solar-and-wind powered house located in La Paz, Iloilo worth P7 million to Hizon as payment for his services but the cager turned it down. The Megavoltz squad has since disbanded and filed for bankruptcy.

With reports from Gerald Lacuarta

GOOD LUCK!
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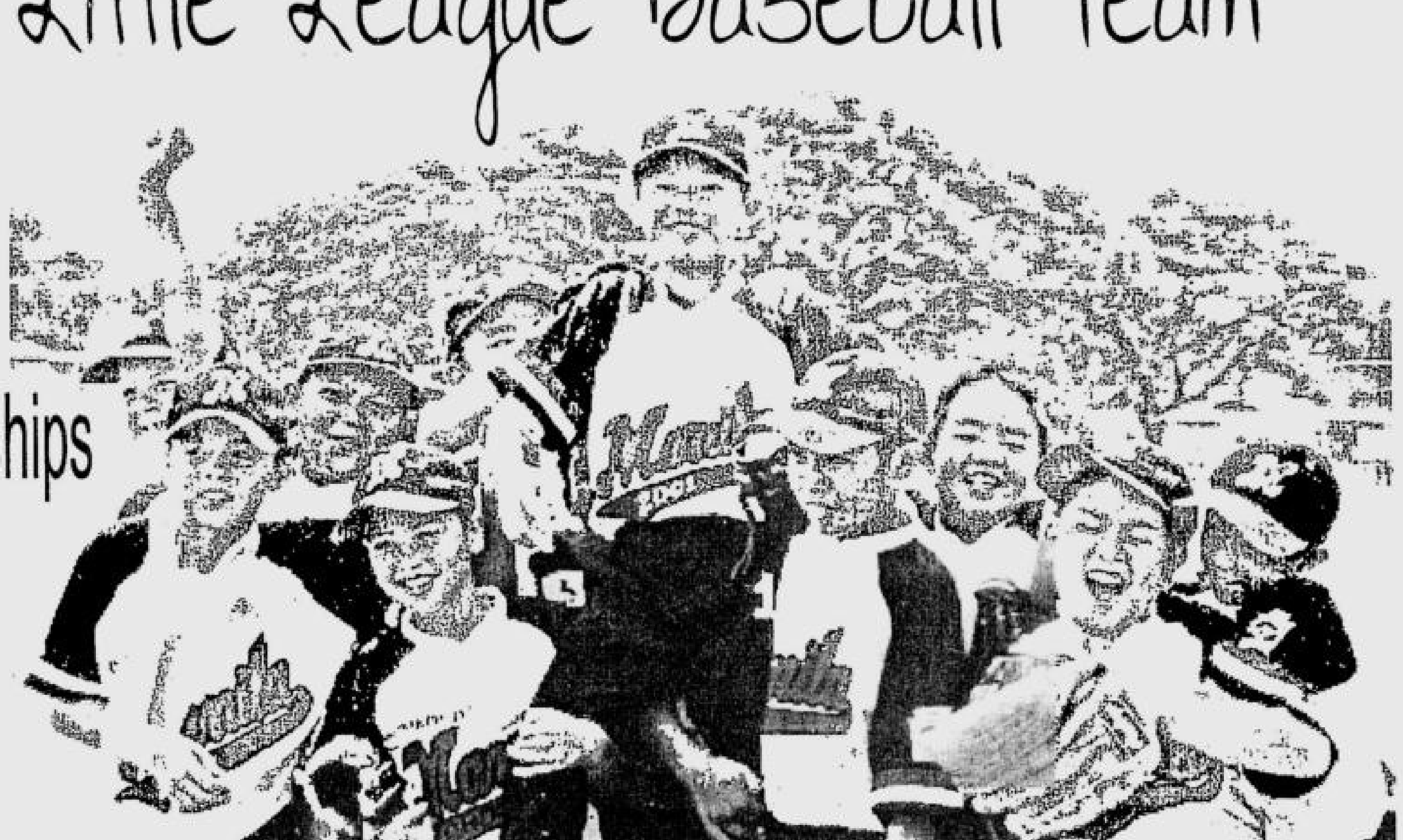

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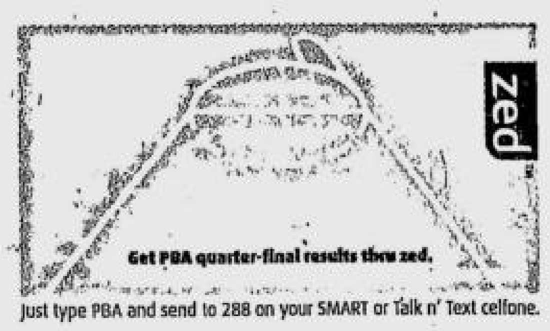
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BILLIARDS: 2001 BCA Open 9-Ball Championship, Men's Finals at 9 p.m. on ESPN

GOLF: B.C. Open Highlights at 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

Inside the PGA Tour at 12 noon (r – 8 p.m.) on Star Sports

PGA John Deere Classic, First Round at 10 p.m. on Star Sports

TENNIS: A&P Tennis Classic Event Semifinals at 9 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

CYCLING: 2001 Tour De France Highlights, Stage #17 at 1:30 p.m. (r – 7:30 p.m.) on ESPN

BASKETBALL: NBA Inside Stuff at 8:30 p.m. on Star Sports

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ■ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

MENK (left): Hurdles legal battle, but PBA remains as obstacle. Paras is at right.
FILEPHOO

It's go for Menk; PBA says, 'No!'

GAMES TODAY *(Philsports)*
5:15 p.m. – Tanduay vs Purefoods
7:30 p.m. – Ginebra vs Red Bull

BY MARC ANTHONY REYES

THERE'S good news and bad news for Tanduay Gold.

The good news is, Eric Menk has been finally allowed to play professionally after the Department of Justice yesterday ruled that he indeed has Filipino blood.

Now, for the bad news: The PBA won't let him play until the next conference because the deadline for submission of final lineup for the on-going Commissioner's Cup had expired last Saturday.

It was a devastating blow for the Rhummasters, who for almost two years now have been trying to bring back Menk into the fold despite initial disapproval by the DOJ and the Bureau of Immigration.

"We are trying our best to convince the PBA to allow Menk to play," said Chito Bugia, Tanduay team manager. "In fact he (Menk) is there appealing with the league officials even as we speak. It would be a pity if he couldn't play for us tomorrow."

PBA acting commissioner Sonny Barrios said last night the decision remains unchanged.

Tanduay needs to beat Purefoods twice to make it to the semifinals. They meet at 5:15 p.m. today at Philsports.

Batang Red Bull battles Barangay Ginebra at 7:30 p.m., needing only to win to advance.

DOJ secretary Hernando Perez last Wednesday asked BI to recognize Menk as a Filipino citizen after it was established that Menk's mother, Lucia Padua Menk, wasn't an American citizen yet when she gave birth to Eric on Aug. 24, 1974.

Bugia said Menk is regularly prac-

IT'S GO/ A20

MBA: Gems battle Patriots

STANDINGS	W	L
LBC Batangas	9	2
Andoks San Juan	9	3
Negros	9	4
Cebuana Lhuillier	8	4
Fedex L. Lakers	5	6
Nueva Ecija	2	8
Davao Eagle	2	9
Socsargen	2	10

GAMES TODAY
3 p.m.—Cebuana Lhuillier vs Nueva Ecija (Araullo Gym)
5:30 p.m.—Fedex Laguna Lakers vs Davao (Rizal Memorial College Gym)

CEBUANA Lhuillier aims to join Negros at third spot as it takes on slumping Nueva Ecija today in the first phase of the 2001 MBA season at the Araullo Centrum Gym in Cabanatuan City.

Currently at fourth spot with an 8-4 slate, the Gems are picked to win over the Patriots in their 3 p.m. match. The Gems beat the Patriots, 96-81, in their first encounter two weeks back in Cebu City.

But with the Patriots hard-pressed to come up with a victory to stay in the hunt for a spot in the next round, expect the Gems to face tough opposition especially with the Nueva Ecija hometown crowd out to distract them from accomplishing their task of moving up the standing.

Nueva Ecija will have to check Matt Mitchell, an intimidating presence in the shaded area where he is almost unstoppable when given ample space.

De La Salle trounces UST, 87-73

BY DENNIS EROA

FIVE days after getting drubbed by UE, De La Salle rebounded with an 87-73 shellacking of UST, creating a five-way logjam for first spot in the UAAP men's basketball championship last night at the Philsports Arena.

"Unlike in the past, the team still lacks the killer's instinct. We celebrated too early," said La Salle coach Franz Pumaren.

The Green Archers improved their record to 2-1, same cards of FEU, NU, UE and Ateneo.

With Ren Ren Ritualo and rookie Mark Cardona hitting their shots, the Green Archers raced to their biggest lead, 71-58, 1:39 remaining.

La Salle suddenly turned cold in the fourth as UST uncorked a searing rally to nudge to within 75-66, 3:28 left, But Ritualo ended the uprising by draining two of his five triples which put the outcome beyond doubt.

Adamson's search for its first win in two years continued to fail as it got waylaid by the University of the East, 74-58, in the other seniors' game. Adamson took its 17th La Salle trounces UST, 87-73 straight setback since losing all its 14 matches last year.

The junior division was a different story. The Baby Falcons clobbered the UE Pages, 74-62, seizing solo leadership with three straight wins.

Prolific Jun Cortez proved unstoppable as the UST Tiger Cubs edged the La Salle Greenhills Begals, 58-54, for a 1-1 record.

LA SALLE 87—Ritualo 29, Cardona 21, Wilson 10, Cortez 10, Sta. Maria 9, Ramos 4, Arejola 4, Bunyi 0, Gavino 0.

UST 73—Oreta 18, Hubalde 16, Gelig 11, Naninga 6, Espiritu 6, de Guzman 6, Villamin 4, Luanzon 3, Raterta 3, Agleron 0, Bagulo 0.

Quarters: 24-21, 44-32, 71-48, 87-73.

Nike 3 on 3 tomorrow

DAVAO CITY—Holy Child School starts defense of its title in the Davao leg of the eighth Nike 3-on-3 basketball championship tomorrow, July 28, at the University of Mindanao Matina gym.

Eight new teams are entered in the tournament—Assumption College of Davao, Christian High School, Daniel Aguinaldo High School, Deeper Life Academy, Holy Cross of Davao, Notre Dame of Dadiangas, Philippine Science High School and St. Peter's College.

But Holy Child expects tough competition from returnees Agro Industrial Foundation College, Ateneo de Davao High School, Brokenshire Science High School, Davao Central High School Emar Learning Center, Holy Child, Holy Cross of Agcao, Holy Cross of Sasa, Philippine Women's College, Rizal Memorial Colleges, Thompson Christian School and University of Mindanao.

The champion will bring home individual medals and P12,000 worth of Nike products. It will also represent Davao in the national finals slated on Aug. 18 at SM Megamall.

The field will be divided into four divisions with the top team in each group advancing into the crossover semifinals.

On hand to grace the opening ceremony at 8:30 a.m. are Commissioner Butch Ramirez of the Philippine Sports Commission, PSC regional director Joy Encabo, UMNB president Willie Torres and Ateneo de Davao College coach Omar Ramirez.

Nike Inc., which is presenting the event, will be represented by Sports Coordinator Rely San Agustin, Footwear Product Line Manager Dennis Tan and Area Coordinator Dondee Alderite.

BL Showdown at Roligon

THE MUCH-AWAITED BL Showdown 7-Stag National Derby will be held at the Roligon Mega Cockpit in Parañaque City on Sept. 3, 5 and 7.

Hosted by Boy "Lechon" de Roca, Juancho Aguirre and Danny "Showdown" Ty, the event will be participated in by many of the breeders and cockers in the country.

Promoter Ty announced that the farm-to-farm screening begins today. But screening at the Roligon is set on Aug. 12, 19, 26 and Sept. 2, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Call 913-2626, 421-1275, 833-1638 and 833-2275 for more details.

The criteria in this derby sponsored by Lakpue Drug Inc. are:

1. Stags must not be older than 10 months with seven (7) primary feathers and with a general appearance of a stag.
2. All stags shall be categorized into classes Y, R and M and will be matched accordingly to ensure that stags of similar age fight each other.
3. NGBA, GF-BAN, UCAP, NCA, MIGBA & PAGBA, LGBA, ICBA banded stags shall be accepted and must be presented for proper banding and categorization.

Ty said stags that passed the screening committee of Mimi Itchon and Juancho Aguirre can be accepted in all stag derbies at Roligon.

He also said that the 3-stag elimination will be on Sept. 3 and 5 while the 4-stag finals will be on Sept. 7.

Pasay derby tonight

ACTION returns to the Pasay City Cockpit when the special 4-cock event gets going at 7 tonight bannering more than 60 fights.

Hosted by well-known cocker Joey Lapid, the derby offers P300,000 in cash prizes to the winners. Entry fee is P10,000.

"This is a fitting follow-up to the successful PCC Anniversary derby last week which attracted 156 entries," said pit managers Oscar Gonzales, Eric dela Rosa and Butchoy Olano.

Call 816-6750, 843-1890 and 843-1746 for submission of weights (7 a.m. to 2 p.m.).

Meanwhile, regular hackfights are also held at PCC every Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

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'Si meyor, naman'

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

AS this piece was being written, the popular Valenzuela Cockpit and Sports Arena along MacArthur Highway remains padlocked, leaving hundreds of poor and helpless families out in the streets—jobless, cold, wet and hungry.

The order to padlock the landmark cockpit north of Manila was ill-advised. The closure order did not sit well with the honest and hardworking members of the community who are now putting the blame on Valenzuela City Mayor Bobits Carlos and the city council for padlocking the cockpit and depriving many people of their main source of income.

I'm taking the cudgels for them by supporting their cry for justice and their fight for equity and fairness. I'm rallying behind the call to reopen the VCSA in behalf of the displaced employees and workers, including the *kristos* and countless kids, especially the impoverished street children who are overcoming the present harsh times by returning honest errands instead of sniffing shabu.

"Kawawa po naman kami," said a crestfallen employee. "Ano po ang gagawin ko? Mayroon pa naman akong mga anak na pinag-aaral."

There are more than 1,500 registered cockpits in the country. However, their operation is not regulated by the national government but by the local government units or LGUs, particularly the mayor and members of the Sanggunian. Because of this setup, the frequency with which a cockpit can hold cockfights or derbies depends entirely on its connection and sphere of influence. The absence of standardized rules and regulations governing the holding of cockfights and derbies also adds to the problem.

If there are legal problems, even the Games and Amusements Board cannot intervene because it has no power to do so. The Department of Interior and Local Government also has no say in matters that involve cockfighting even though it has supervisory jurisdiction over all LGUs.

The only available solution for the time being is for the cockpit owners to go to court. But then, the wheel of justice grinds ever so slow in this God-forsaken country that it will take a long, long time for the court to decide the case.

It's plain silly to stop the weekday cockfights at the suburban VCSA. For aside from giving jobs to many people, it is also known for staging charity concerts, with the proceeds going to the construction of churches, chapels and a playground for street children.

BASEBALL RESULTS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	60	41	.594	—
Boston	57	43	.570	2 1-2
Toronto	48	54	.471	12 1-2
Baltimore	42	59	.416	18
Tampa Bay	33	68	.327	27
Central	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	58	41	.586	—
Minnesota	59	42	.584	—
Chicago	49	50	.495	9
Detroit	43	55	.439	14 1-2
Kansas City	40	61	.396	19
West	W	L	Pct	GB
Seattle	72	29	.713	—
Oakland	54	47	.535	18
Anaheim	51	50	.505	21
Texas	43	57	.430	28 1-2

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	57	44	.564	
Philadelphia	56	45	.554	1
Florida	52	49	.515	5
New York	46	56	.451	11 1-2
Montreal	44	58	.431	13 1-2
Central	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	59	41	.590	
Houston	55	45	.550	4
St. Louis	50	49	.505	8 1-2
Milwaukee	44	56	.440	15
Pittsburgh	38	61	.384	20 1-2
Cincinnati	38	63	.376	21 1-2
West	W	L	Pct	GB
Arizona	59	42	.584	
Los Angeles	58	44	.569	1 1-2
San Francisco	53	49	.520	6 1-2
San Diego	49	53	.480	10 1-2
Colorado	43	58	.426	16

COMPLETE RESULTS
American League
Texas 6, Baltimore 5, 1st game;
Texas 5, Baltimore 2, 2nd game;
Toronto 4, Boston 3, 10 innings;
N.Y. Yankees 4, Detroit 2;
Cleveland 7, Chicago White Sox 5;
Tampa Bay 3, Anaheim 1;
Kansas City 5, Seattle 1;
Minnesota 3, Oakland 1
National League
Atlanta 11, Cincinnati 3;
Philadelphia 8, Montreal 4;
St. Louis 10, Houston 2;
Milwaukee 4, Los Angeles 3;
Chicago Cubs 6, Pittsburgh 5;
San Francisco 9, Colorado 8;
N.Y. Mets 5, Florida 2;
Arizona 9, San Diego 6.
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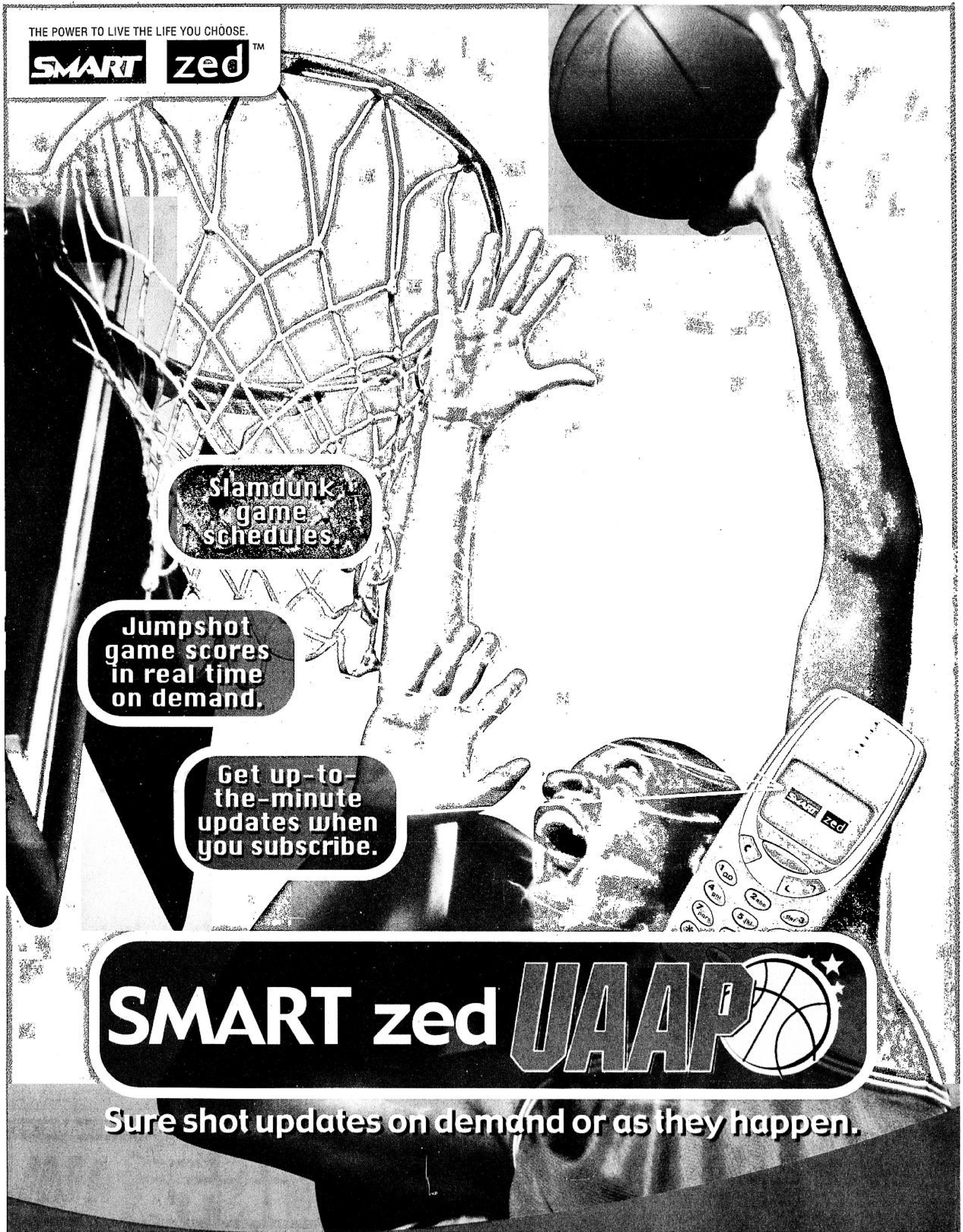
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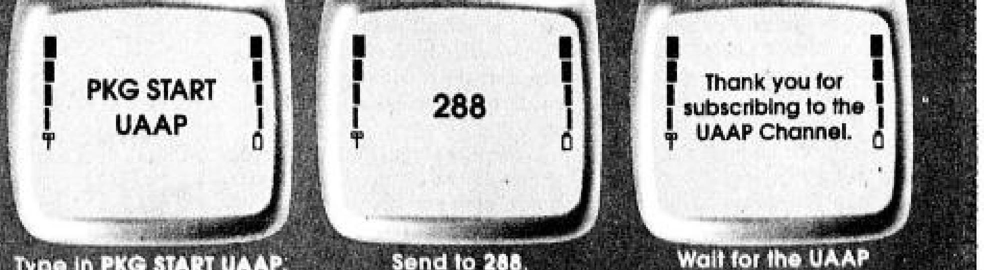
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ROTC cadets told to be united A24

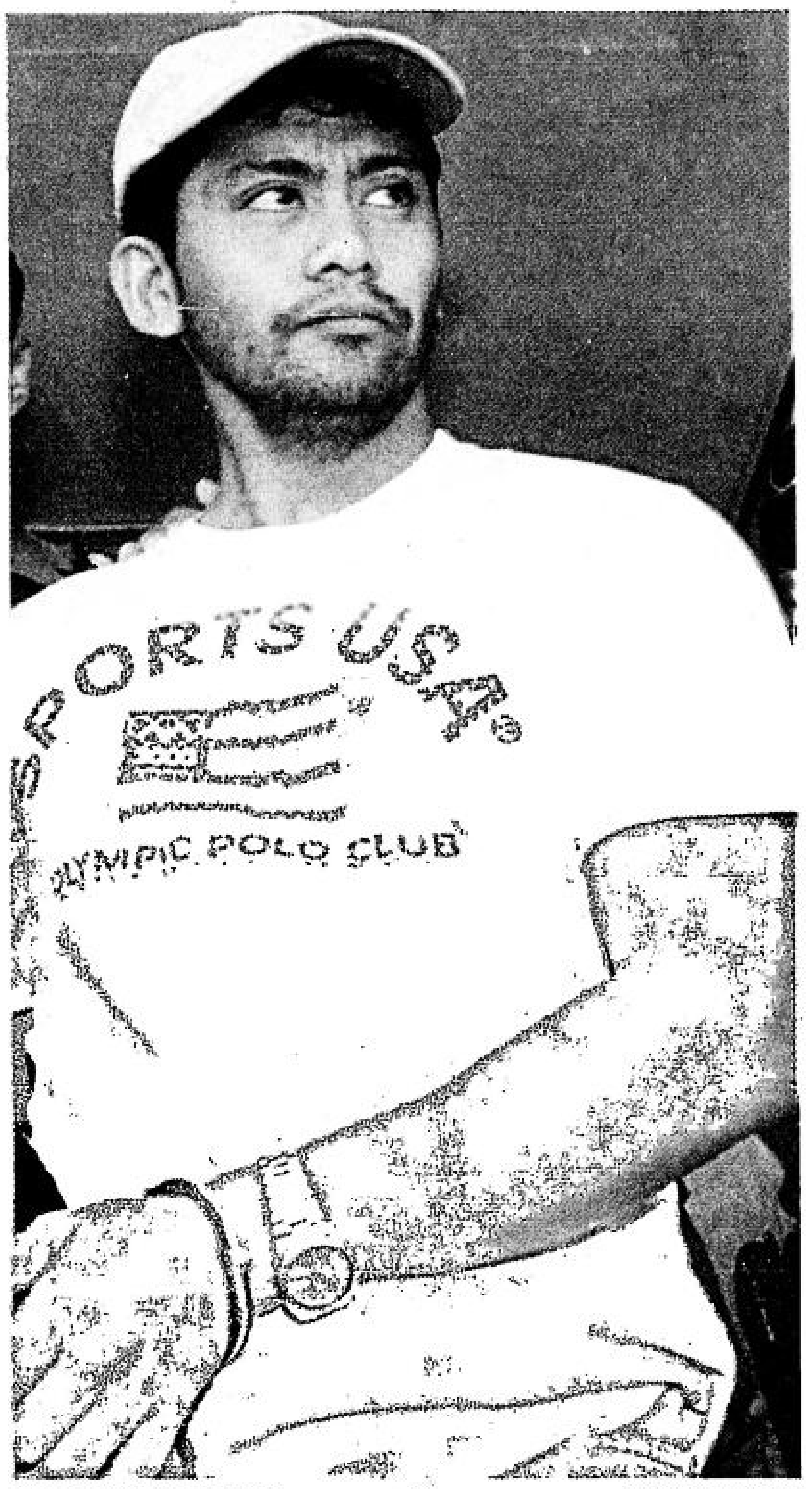
METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Manila dad warns on misuse of historical paintings, papers A25

Masseur arrested for Tadao murder

Neighbor of victim identifies suspect



SUSPECT Alex Ilagan. RANDY HORMILLOSA

By Christian V. Esguerra

POLICE on Wednesday arrested a masseur in connection with the killing of Japanese harpist Tadao Hayashi in Caloocan City on Sunday.

Members of Task Force Tadao arrested Alex Ilagan, 31, at his cousin's house in Floodway, Pasig City, at 5 p.m. Wednesday, two days after a witness claimed he saw the suspect in Hayashi's house.

Secretary Joey Lina of the Department of Interior and Local Government presented the suspect to reporters at the Caloocan Police Headquarters yesterday.

At the press conference, Hayashi's neighbor Reynaldo Ortillano said Ilagan was the man he saw knocking on Hayashi's house at LD Village, Tala, Caloocan City Sunday evening.

Antonio Clet, 57, Hayashi's aide, found the harpist's body soaked in blood the following morning. Money from Hayashi's wallet, a new CD player and a camera were missing, a police report said.

Hayashi was killed between 8 and 10 p.m. on Sunday, said Supt. Dionicio Borromeo, Caloocan Station Investigation and Intelligence Division chief. .

But Ilagan did not apparently match the sketch of a suspect which police released on Tuesday. The sketch was based on Ortillano's description.

In the sketch, the suspect was described to be 5-foot-4 and of medium build. But Ilagan is about 5-foot-9 inches tall and heavily built.

But Borromeo set aside the discrepancy and said police were convinced it was Ilagan who killed Hayashi.

Ilagan, said to be Hayashi's lover and masseur, allegedly

MASSEUR/ A24

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Cowboy Grill 431 REMEDIOS ST., MALATE	KNIGHTS FEEDBACK	P 250 CONSUMABLE 9-2 AM/521.8143
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GUMABON

Lesbian hunted for disappearance of Miss Caloocan

By Christian V. Esguerra

POLICE are looking for a lesbian suspected of having abducted last week the 16-year-old Mutya ng Caloocan 2001 titleholder.

Relatives of Sheena Marie Gumabon believe that Leah Reyes, 28, kidnapped her on July 17 at a public market in Novaliches, Caloocan.

"We know she (Reyes) took her. We couldn't think of anybody else," Gumabon's mother, Herminia, 51, told the INQUIRER.

Carlos Zapanta, 32, Gumabon's uncle, said his niece was last seen near Ernesto's Videoke at the Novaliches market. Gumabon was supposed to be on her way to the Manila Central University, where she is a freshman taking up Pharmacy. She also worked as a singer at Ernesto's videoke.

Herminia said Reyes who lives near the videoke has been courting her daughter since they met a year ago. Last year, Herminia said Reyes lured Gumabon into staying with her in an apartelle in Lagro, Novaliches from Dec. 22 to 25.

The incident was recorded on police blotter.

But Gumabon managed to "escape" that time after the Reyes left her at the Gotesco mall on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City, Herminia said.

She said that after her daughter won the Mutya ng Caloocan crown, the title once held by deposed President Estrada's rumored daughter Josephine Rose "JR" Ejercito, Reyes again pursued Gumabon.

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Year-old girl killed by car

A ONE-YEAR-OLD girl who was just beginning to make her first steps died violently when a car ran over her in Quezon City yesterday.

Instead of stopping to help the victim, the driver stepped on the gas, police said.

Christine Ancheta, of Kampupot Street, Roxas District, Quezon City, died on the spot after the car ran over her outside her home, said investigator SPO4 Rey Gonzales, of the Central Police District-Traffic Sector IV.

The girl suffered many broken and crushed bones, police said.

Gonzales said the accident happened around 12 p.m. yesterday along Kampupot Street.

The girl slipped out of their house unnoticed by her mother who was busy preparing lunch.

Gonzales said investigators were still trying to find out if witnesses saw what kind of car the suspect was driving, or if anyone was able to jot down the license plate number. *Philip C. Tubeza*

Masseur . . .

From page A23)

killed the Japanese when the harpist failed to give in to the suspect's demand, based on evidence found in the victim's house.

Borromeo said Ilagan makes a living by befriending male homosexuals and luring them into giving him money.

Ilagan used to be the lover of one Cesar Villanueva, owner of an antique shop in Quezon City, Borromeo said.

Villanueva reportedly severed the relationship when Ilagan allegedly started to demand too much money from him.

One time, the suspect allegedly ran amuck in Villanueva's shop when he failed to give in to Ilagan's request.

In an interview, Ilagan admitted he was Hayashi's masseur, but not his lover. He said a friend introduced him to Hayashi in 1987 and began to regularly visit the Japanese to give him a massage.

"I never extorted money from him," Ilagan said. "He was the one who volunteered to give me money."

He said he last saw Hayashi over two years ago.

Ilagan insisted he could not have killed Hayashi because the victim was "very good to (him)."

"I could not have killed him, he is even the godfather of my eldest son," Ilagan said in Filipino.

Police are set to file robbery with homicide charges against Ilagan before the city prosecutor's office.

Letter from a protesting boxer

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

THIS IS not an isolated case, a professional boxer getting the rough deal, complete with the shameless runaround from promoters and other involved parties. The talented world-class fighter, a former World Boxing Federation (WBF) lightweight champion, has decided to bare his woes in a letter to the head of the Games and Amusement Board. But he also furnished the **Inquirer** a copy, which we print here in its original form, with the hope it would reach other concerned authorities, and the general public as well. Please read on.

* * *

Chairman Dominador R. Cepeda, Jr.
Games and Amusement Board
Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas
Makati City

Sir,

Sana po sa pamamagitan ng sulat kong ito ay maipaabot ko sa inyong butihing tanggapan ang aking paliwanag na may kinalaman sa akin bilang isang propesyonal na boksingero dito sa ating bansa.

Noong buwan ng Abril, taong kasalukuyan, ako po ay inilapit ni Mr. Alfred Maglinao kay Mr. Bebot Elorde upang humingi ng laban sa kanyang promosyon. Sa una ay nag-alinlangan si Mr. Elorde kasi po alam niyang ako ay may management contract kay Danny Espiritu, kaya ang sabi niya ay himingi muna akò ng release papers sa manager ko at ako ay bibigyan niya ng laban dito sa Pilipinas at sa US. Hindi naman po nag-atubili at ako ay nakipag-usap sa dati kong manager na si Mr. Espiritu at ako ay kanyang pinagbigyan at pumirma siya ng nasabing release papers na inihanda pa ni Mr. Elorde.

Sa madali't sabi po, ibinigay ko ang pirmadong release papers kasama ang aking Philippine passport kay Mr. Bebot Elorde. Matapos kong ibigay ang mga nasabing dokumento, binigyan po ako ni Mr. Elorde ng anim na libong piso (P6,000) bilang cash advance, sabay sabing bibigyan daw niya ako ng laban sa May 26 at ako po ay pinapirma niya ng isang blangkong fight contract at pagkatapos daw po ng laban sa nasabing petsa at ako ay mananalo ay dadalhin daw po niya ako sa US kasama ang iba niyang mga boksingero upang doon lumaban.

* * *

Matapos ang pagkikita naming iyon ni Mr. Elorde, masaya po akong umuwi sa aking pamilya dala ang nasabing halaga at ang magandang balita. Laking tuwa po ng aking asawa at mga magulang nang sabihin ko ito sa kanila. Sa katunayan ay pinaghandaan ko po ang magiging laban ko na sinabi sa akin ni Mr. Elorde at ako po ay nag-ensayo sa Mandaluyong City Gym. Ngunit ang aking kagalakan ay nabahiran ng lungkot nang lumipas ang nasabing petsa at hindi natuloy ang aking laban sa hindi malamang dahilan.

Dagli po akong nakipag-usap kay Mr. Bebot at ang sabi niya ay huwag daw akong mag-alala at nailipat lang daw ang petsa ng laban ko sa unang linggo ng Hunyo. Ngunit lumipas ang unang linggo ng Hunyo, hindi rin natuloy ang aking laban.

Tinawagan ko po sa telepono si Mr. Elorde ngunit ang sabi sa akin ng sumasagot sa telepono ay wala siya o dili kaya siya umano ay abala. Nakakalungkot po ang nangyari, nauwi sa wala ang pinaghandaan kong laban pati na po ang pangarap kong makalaban sa Amerika dahil mula noon ay wala na akong nadinig na balita mula sa kampo ni Mr. Elorde.

Lubos po akong nag-alala matapos ang nasabing pangyayari. Nagugutom po ang aking mag-iina na umaasa lang sa aking kikitain sa pagbo-boksing. Dalawa po ang aking anak at wala naman akong ibang hanapbuhay kundi boksing lang. Kaya sinabi ko sa aking sarili na kung may magbibigay ng pagkakataon na makalaban ako, maliban sa promosyon ni Mr. Elorde, ito ay aking tatanggapin para lamang may pangtawid gutom ako at ang aking pamilya.

Nitong nakaraang ikalawang linggo ng Hunyo, inalok po ako ni Mr. Sammy Gello-ani, isang promoter sa Cebu, at sa pamamagitan ni Mr. Jimmy Zuño ay pumirma po ako ng aking fight contract para sa RP jr. welterweight laban kay Dindo Castanares na dapat sana ay nitong Hulyo 22, 2001, ngunit ito ay pansamantalang naiurong sa dalawang kadahilanan.

Una daw po, may paglabag daw po ako sa kontrata ko sa promosyon ni Mr. Elorde dahil hindi daw po sumipot nitong huling promosyon niya.

Paano naman po ako sisipot ay hindi ako nasabihan at inakala ko po na hindi matutuloy ang laban ko. Sa akin pong pagkakaintindi, kahit na nakapirma akong una kay Mr. Elorde ay hindi ito valid hanggang hindi ito naipa-file sa GAB, gaya ng ginawa ni Mr. Gello-ani na agad niyang ini-apply sa nasabing tanggapan ang aking laban kay Dindo Castanares kayat ito ang inaprobahan ng GAB.

Kung ang sasabihin naman ng mga namamahala sa GAB na may waiver at pumayag si Mr. Gell-ani na lumaban ako sa promosyon ni Mr. Elorde, hindi po ako sinangguni ni Mr. Gell-ani at tinanong kung payag akong lumaban. Nilabag ng GAB at ni Mr. Gello-ani ang aking karapatan bilang isang propesyonal na boksingero. Sila-sila ang nag-usap at hindi ako binigyan ng pagkakataon na ibigay ang aking desisyon.

Ang ika-dalawang dahilan kung bakit ayaw akong payagan ng GAB na lumaban at i-renew ang aking lisensiya ay may trace daw ng Hepa ang aking medical. Alam ko po ito, at ito ay nalaman ko mga dalawang taon na ang nakakaraan noong i-match ako ni Mr. Jimmy Zuno sa Australia. Hindi po ako pinatuloy ni Mr. Zuno sa laban kong iyon dahil sa nasabing medical findings. Ngunit bakit po ako binigyan ng GAB ng medical clearance at pinayagang lumaban sa WBF title fight na kung saan ay nanalo ako noong Marso 23, 2000?

Pagkatapos po ng nasabing title fight, pinayagan din po nila akong lumaban sa ibang mga local boxers dito sa atin at noong Enero 2, 2001 ay binigyan din nila ako ng medical clearance at pinayagang lumaban sa PABA lightweight championship fight sa Thailand.

Sa abot ng aking kaalaman, ang mga taong nakipag-usap sa kanila sa mga nasabing laban ko ay mga malalapit na kaibigan ng mga opisyales sa GAB. Ngunit kung hindi nila kaibigan ay hindi nila pagbibigyan at ang tulad kong boxer ang kawawa.

Sana naman po Mr. Chairman ay bigyan ninyo ng pansin ang kaso kong ito. Alam ko pong isa kayong matuwid na opisyal ng GAB at hindi ninyo ako papayagan na maapi ng mga taong mapagsamantala.

Masakit pong isipin na kung wala kaming mga boksingero, siguro wala ding trabaho ang ilang tiwaling opisyales ng GAB. Isa lamang ako sa maraming boksingero na lagi na lamang naiisahan ng mga mapagsamantalang mga tao. Mahirap lamang po ako. Sana naman maawa kayo.

Lubos na gumagalang,
JOSELITO RIVERA

ROTC cadets told to be united

By Christian V. Esguerra

"DON'T divide yourselves and get conquered."

The father of slain Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) cadet Mark Welson Chua of the University of Sto. Tomas on Wednesday gave this piece of fatherly advice to warring student groups calling for the abolition of the military training program.

Unless the groups get their acts together, their campaign would fail, Welson Chua told the INQUIRER.

"This is not the time for bickering," he said. "This is a time to set aside ideological differences."

He gave the advice after a faction led by the College Editors' Guild of the Philippines (CEGP) and a group headed by the Movement for the Advancement of Student Power (MASP) revealed a crack in what appeared to be a formidable call for ROTC's abolition.

Rey Asis of CEGP had claimed the MASP faction was willing to compromise with the government over the mere reformation of the military program.

Emman Hizon, national coordinator of MASP, said Asis' accusation was merely born out of the ideological differences between their groups. He said his group started the campaign and would continue pushing for ROTC's abolition.

CEGP is part of Abolish!, a network of student groups calling for the unconditional abolition of ROTC. The network includes Anakbayan, National Union of Students in the Philippines, Student Christian Movement, League of Filipino Students, and the Kalipunan ng Kabataang Kristiyano.

The MASP faction includes the Student Councils Association of the Philippines.

Chua said the bickering of the two factions is "unhealthy" for their campaign.

"The problem is there's too much politics," he said. "It's obvious that some militant groups as well as politicians are just riding on the issue. It's time to get real."

Benjamin Abalos, Metro Manila Development Authority chair, on Sunday threw his support behind the anti-ROTC campaign. He said cadets should be given the option to attend ROTC classes or do socio-civic activities.

Chua said both factions should just join his call for a reform of the ROTC.

Chua said his slain son, Mark, would have wanted to change the "corrupt" system, not abolish it.

Mark was abducted and killed by supposed soldiers after he exposed the alleged anomalies in the UST ROTC program.

Chua wants to have mandatory and complete ROTC training for one summer "to lessen if not eradicate the corruption."

Cadets are currently required to finish four semesters of ROTC.

Chua's stand, however, faces rough sailing as militant student groups are pushing for the ROTC's immediate abolition.

Priests, school administrators, and members of the media are set to form the "Bantay ROTC" group that would look into complaints about and the problems of the student military program, Chua said.

Car theft suspect nabbed for preying on TV director

By Agnes E. Donato

POLICE on Wednesday arrested another suspected member of a car theft syndicate that last week victimized actor-director Al Tantay.

Supt. Antonio Aguilar, Eastern Police District criminal investigation chief, identified the suspect as businessman Jaime Cruz, 53, of Morales Compound, Sta. Lucia, Pasig City.

Cruz was apprehended inside his home about 1:30 p.m. after he was implicated by Chinese-Filipino businessman Francis Ong, 47, who was arrested last Sunday by police agents.

Aguilar said his group tapped the help of SPO3 Reggie Sta. Ana of the Central Police District to track down Cruz, who is also engaged in buying and selling cars.

But Cruz denied knowing Ong and being involved with a group of big-time car thieves preying on luxury cars in Metro Manila.

Police are now preparing car theft charges against Cruz before the Pasig City Prosecutor's Office. Cruz is detained at the Pasig City police station.

Earlier investigation showed that Ong pawned to Tantay a brown Tuscany Land Cruiser for P720,000, with the help of the actor's long-time friend Jose Mari de Leon last July 9.

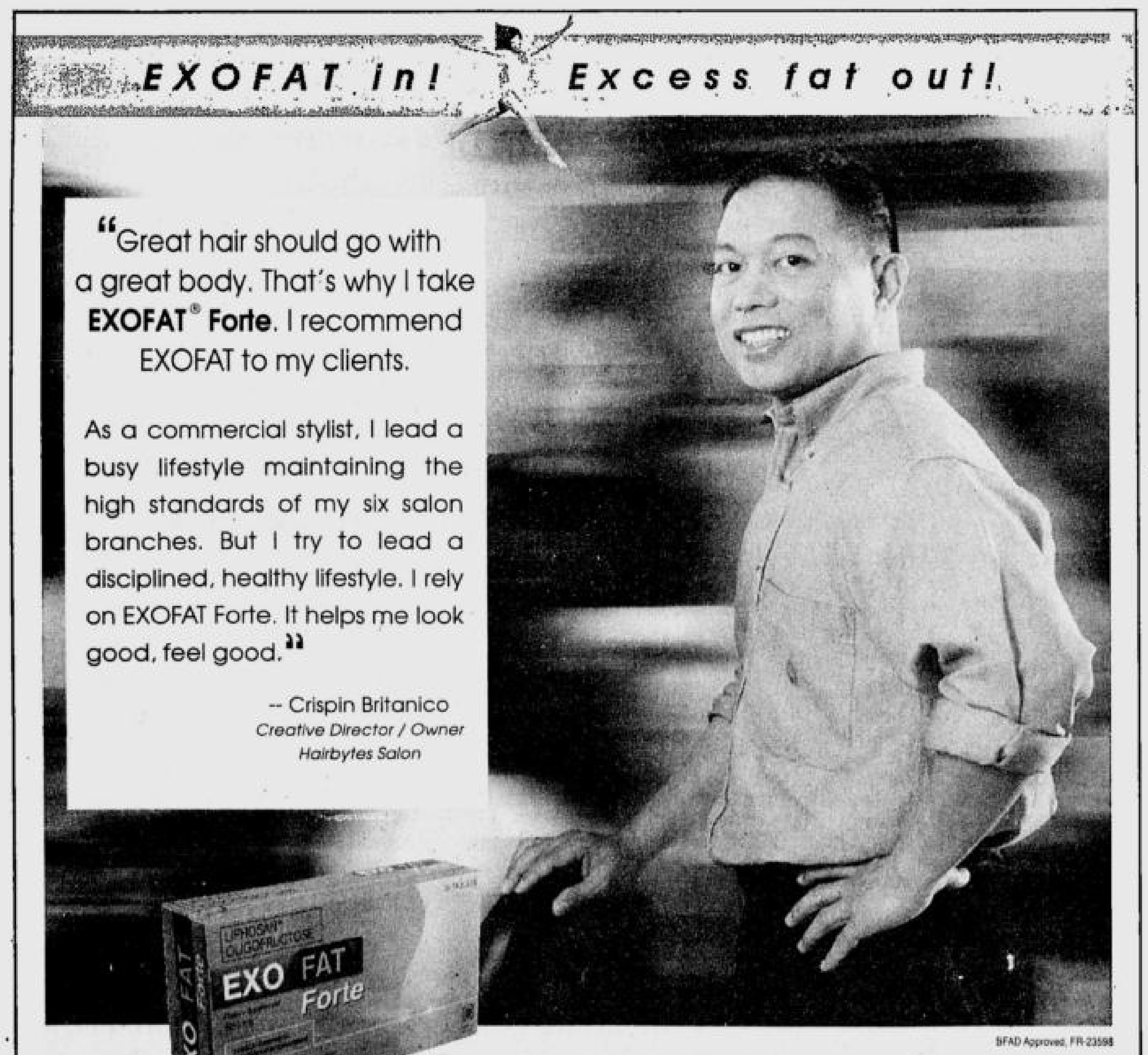
Tantay showed police a note that Ong wrote where he promised to redeem the car for P800,000.

After a week, Ong called up Tantay and asked him if he would be interested in buying the car. Ong was said to have asked the actor to pay an additional P250,000 for the car and P150,000 in commission to de Leon for acting as middleman.

This prompted Tantay to check the documents Ong had furnished him. He then learned from the PNP Traffic Management Group that the Land Cruiser was a stolen vehicle.

TMG records also showed that the car was stolen from Fernando Bulabao, of Pandacan, Manila, while it was parked on M.H. del Pilar Street in Malate, Manila last June 20.

The vehicle's original license plate also turned out to be VMC 251. The one on the Tuscany Land Cruiser was traced to an Isuzu Gemini.



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Mason dies after beating for bumping QC boy

By Philip C. Tubeza

MASON Miguel B. Andres, 58, was killed late Tuesday afternoon for running into a young boy while walking home in Quezon City.

Andres, of 113 Pluto St., Barangay Bahay Toro, Quezon City, was drunk when he bumped and nearly stumbled on the son of fellow mason Ricardo Diestura, 37, of 292 Pook Masagana, also in Barangay Bahay Toro, said investigator SPO1 Cresencio Bajao of the Central Police District-Criminal Investigation Unit.

Because of the accident, the suspect beat up the victim, who lost consciousness when he fell and hit his head on the concrete pavement, Bajao said. Andres did not regain consciousness.

Bajao said the victim had too much to drink that afternoon and was trying to maintain his balance as he walked home on Masagana Street, Barangay Bahay Toro at 5:10 p.m.

But near the suspect's house, Andres collided with Diestura's son and nearly fell on the boy, Bajao said.

Bajao said this infuriated the suspect, who approached the victim and began to punch the living daylights out of Andres.

As he was being punched, Andres lost his balance and hit his head on the pavement, Bajao said.

Andres lost consciousness and witnesses said there was blood oozing from the victim's head.

The victim's stepson, Ricky Abellar, took the victim to the Quezon City General Hospital, Bajao said.

But the victim did not recover from the coma and was transferred to the National Kidney and Transplant Institute. He died about 5 a.m. yesterday, Bajao said.

Police are now looking for the suspect.

Book launch in UP

THE HONOR Society of Phi Kappa Phi of the University of the Philippines will launch the book "Phi Kappa Phi in the University—Selected Papers in the '90s" on Wednesday, Aug. 1, at the Bahay ng Alumni at UP Diliman.

The book contains speeches delivered by eminent members on various occasions, special commentaries and press reports on Phi Kappa Phi activities.

Carpenter shot dead

By Philip C. Tubeza

WHEN carpenter Romulo D. Lanuza, 50, heard several gunshots late Wednesday night, he went out of his home in Quezon City to find out what was happening.

The next thing his son Jerson knew, Lanuza was down on the pavement, bleeding to death from several gunshot wounds.

Lanuza, of 34 President Quezon Extension, Barangay Commonwealth, Quezon City, died after suspect Laurence Leal, also of President Quezon Extension, shot him several times, said investigator PO3 Jojo Miranda of the Central Police District-Criminal Investigation Unit (CPD-CIU).

Lanuza was resting at home when he heard gunshots at 10:19 p.m., Miranda said.

He said Lanuza decided to check it out.

When he stepped out of his house, Lanuza saw Leal holding a 9 mm. pistol, Miranda said.

"Without any warning and for still unknown reasons, the suspect opened fire and shot Lanuza several times," Miranda added.

As Lanuza fell, the suspect ran away, carrying his gun with him, police said.

Miranda said Lanuza's son Jerson also went out of the house when he heard the shots that killed his father.

2 charged in Pasay fraud

By Nelson F. Flores

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation has filed criminal charges against two members of a syndicate allegedly engaged in large-scale fraud involving the issuance of government business permits in Pasay City.

Cresenciano Dela Cruz, husband of Amelita dela Cruz, Pasay City government Business Permit and Licensing Office chief, and Leo Francisco, a known fixer at the Pasay City Hall, were charged before the local city Prosecutors Office with indirect bribery and violation of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act of the Philippines.

Lawyer Elfren Meneses, NBI Anti-Fraud and Computer Crimes Division chief said the suspects were the subjects of a complaint filed in his office by 43-year-old Edgardo Zapanta.

Meneses said that an entrapment operation was immediately mounted following the complaint, which resulted in the arrest of Francisco.

He said Francisco was caught in the act of accepting a P2,000 bribe from businessman Zapanta last Wednesday morning at the office of Amelita Dela Cruz. He said the Dela Cruz couple was not present at the time of the arrest.

In his complaint, Zapanta accused Dela Cruz of demanding P2,000 as grease money when he applied for a business permit last July 9.

Zapanta said that the bribe money, which is on top of the regular fee of P5,600, was supposed to be "for the boys" to facilitate the immediate processing of his application.

Zapanta claimed that he was able to persuade Dela Cruz to accept the payment for the regular fee promised him that the grease money would follow later. But he reported the incident to the NBI. Aside from the charges, Meneses said he would also investigate reports that Mr. Dela Cruz was not an employee of the city government

He said that he could be liable for usurpation of authority, a criminal act punishable under the Revised Penal Code of the Philippines.

Meneses said Francisco was released from custody for further investigation.

Manila councilor warns on misuse of historical paintings, papers

By Jerome Aning

A MANILA councilor has asked Mayor Lito Atienza to conduct a complete inventory of historical and cultural artworks and documents now in the custody of the city government.

Councilor Luciano "Lou" Veloso of Manila's 5th district made the appeal in a proposed resolution after he learned that a businessman recently took a picture of the mural at the Bulwagang Antonio Villegas in City Hall and reproduced it in a commercial calendar.

The painting, done by National Artist Carlos "Botong" Francisco, depicts highlights in Manila's history since the pre-Hispanic period. Veloso said the calendar bore no credit as to the source of the painting.

Veloso also revealed that the photographer hired by the businessman only sought permission to take shots of the mural, but did not mention how the pictures would be used.

"(This is) a plain case of misrepresentation to gain profit at the expense of the city government," the councilor said.

Under Veloso's resolution, persons or firms who wish to use cultural and historical objects in the custody of Manila should first obtain permission and approval from City Hall before they can be reproduced in any medium or form for commercial purposes.

Veloso, who chairs the City Council's tourism and trade and industry committees, said historical paintings, photographs and documents which the city government acquired throughout 400 years of existence "are considered not only priceless, but part of Manila's heritage."

The alderman said the catalogue-inventory would not only protect the city's historical documents and works of art from unscrupulous businessmen, but also from neglect and vandalism.

The resolution was referred to the Council's committees on laws and the education, culture and sports.

Other councilors also wanted to include in the catalogue-inventory all buildings, monuments, shrines and historical places, in the light of the controversy regarding the construction of the City College of Manila campus on the Mehan Garden.

Atienza defended his CCM project at the recently concluded 2001 Asia-Pacific Cultural Cooperation Conference in Taipei, Taiwan, which was attended by 42 mayors in the region.

The mayor, who represented the country in the gathering, chaired a workshop on the preservation of cultural heritage, wherein he reiterated that the new campus would actually enhance the 140-year-old Mehan.

Environmental and conservation groups, as well as the National Historical Institute and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, oppose the construction.

They argued that the Mehan's historical and cultural significance would be best preserved if it remains a public park.

But Atienza, recalling a study by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, told participants in the conference that those who sought "to preserve the cultural and historical heritage, should also address the development needs of the present and future generations."

MMDA vital —Abalos

By Nelson F. Flores

METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. yesterday said the MMDA has an indispensable role in the development of Metro Manila.

Earlier, Valenzuela City Rep. Magtanggol Guinigundo Jr. said the MMDA should be abolished because of redundancy of function.

He said that local government units could effectively perform the tasks the MMDA is performing.

In his defense of the MMDA, Abalos said that any shortcoming of the agency should be blamed on him and not on the institution. Without the MMDA, Abalos stressed that the development of Metro Manila would be uneven.

He said the MMDA coordinates the development programs of the different city and municipal governments in Metro Manila, particularly those concerning garbage management, land use, traffic regulation and environmental development.

Abalos cited as an example the successful existence of a government institution similar to the MMDA in Tokyo, Japan, which coordinates the development of the different areas of Metropolitan Tokyo.

He said it would be "dead wrong" to abolish the MMDA, especially now that the country is entering into a new phase of history.

What should be done, Abalos said, is to strengthen the MMDA as a government body to hasten the coordinated development of Metro Manila.

Abalos invited Guinigundo for a dialogue. He said the young solon could share his ideas on how to develop Metro Manila adding that he would appreciate any help that would lead to Metro Manila's development.

Pasig mayor releases funds for pay raise

WHILE other local government agencies are still wondering where to get their 5-percent salary increase as mandated by Local Budget Circular No. 74 issued by the Department of Budget and Management, Mayor Soly Eusebio ordered the immediate release of funds for the pay adjustment of almost 3,000 Pasig government employees.

Eusebio, the very first woman chief executive of Pasig City, thus beat other local governments and even national agencies to the draw.

Eusebio said she believes that the 5 percent across the board maximum increase is not even enough to cushion the impact of the economic crisis, but she added the city government can only comply with the limit since this is the maximum allowed by the DBM circular.

"We have started to streamline operations and have made high professionalism in government service one of our main agenda," she said. "So why not increase the pay of our very own people?"

She warned, however, that she would not tolerate excesses and abuses in the bureaucracy and she appealed to her employees to give their best in serving the people.

Woman inmate saves drunken man from jail

By Agnes E. Donato

A WOMAN inmate of the Pasig City jail yesterday saved a drunken employee of the Land Transportation Franchise and Regulatory Board from joining her in detention by lending him money for his taxi fare.

Arnel Yabut, 38, a staff member of the LTFRB in Quezon City, was brought to the police station by a taxi driver after Yabut failed to pay the P160 fare.

Yabut told police he went to drink at a club on Timog Avenue in Quezon City Wednesday night. About 2 a.m., he realized he already had too much to drink and decided to go home.

He flagged down a taxi and asked to be taken to his house at 555 C. Santos St. in Barangay Pineda, Pasig City.

But when the taxi reached his address, Yabut found out he had only P7 left in his pocket. He offered to pawn his cell phone to the driver but the latter turned it down and complained instead to the police.

At the Pasig City police station, inmate Josephine Quizon, 25, took pity on Yabut. Quizon, who was being held for alleged illegal drug use, lent Yabut the money for his car fare.

Yabut in return turned over his Nokia 5110 mobile phone to the inmate as an assurance that he would pay her back.

S.O.S
SAVE OUR SKIES

A MANIFESTO OF CONCERN

The liberalization of the air transport industry has been cited as the tool that will hasten the development of the economy, and fuel progress in the country. This was the basis for the drafting of Executive Order 219 in 1995, which transformed the country's civil aviation industry from a one-airline monopoly to a free market. Expectations ran high that liberalization would finally stimulate the economy.

However, it has also become evident that issues continue to hound Philippine civil aviation. While the liberalization of air transport holds the key to economic expansion, it also presents risks and potential pitfalls, not only for local air carriers, but for affected sectors of the economy as well.

We believe in liberalization, as opposed to "Open Skies", as a sound economic tool that hastens economic development and as an irreversible wave that now sweeps the global arena. To say that we should now reverse liberalization to protect certain industries, companies, or interests would be foolish and short-sighted.

But we also believe that the government must see to it that the liberalization of air transport be implemented through an integrated approach, taking into account the varied needs and requirements of the different sectors of the economy that depend, one way or the other, on air transport. The government must guard against an excessive interpretation and hasty implementation of liberalization, which we believe would be disastrous for our economy. Instead, government must conduct a thorough study of how to implement a rational liberalization policy, one that will ensure long-term growth and not just short-term gains.

The Save Our Skies Movement calls on our leaders to adopt a rational view of air transport liberalization. We believe that opening our skies will not automatically mean progress, employment and profit. The appropriate policies need to be based on inputs from sectors of the economy that are directly affected by such policies. Without this coordination and cooperation between government and industry, the effects of liberalization may never be realized.

S.O.S
SAVE OUR SKIES

"A movement initiated by the Network of Independent Travel Agencies and supported by the country's Travel and Tour Agencies, Freight Forwarders and Exporters."

ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

The 'Pagdating' phenomenon

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

IF "Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang" was the country's anthem several months back, our country's obsession now is **Aiza Seguerra**'s "Pagdating ng Panahon."

I have two copies of Aiza's CD. One for my car, and one for my home. Everybody who rides in my car has ended up memorizing the lyrics because I play the song incessantly.

Let's go through the universally adored lyrics of **Moy Ortiz** and **Edith Gallardo.**

Alam kong hindi mo pansin
Narito lang ako
Naghihintay na mahalin
Umaasa kahit di man ngayon
Mapapansin mo rin
Mapapansin mo rin

Alam kong di mo makita
Narito lang ako
Hinihintay lagi kita
Umaasa kahit di man ngayon
Hahanapin mo rin
Hahanapin din.

We love songs about unrequited love. We are an incurably romantic people, content to love from afar, too often overcome by shyness or reservations to just come out and say how we feel. Yet there's still that level of hope.

Pagdating ng panahon
Baka ikaw rin at ako
Baka tibok ng puso ko'y
Maging tibok ng puso mo
Sana nga'y mangyari yon
Kahit di palang ngayon
Sana ay mahalin mo rin
Pagdating ng panahon

Alam kong hindi mo alam
Narito lang ako
Maghihintay kahit kailan
Nangangarap kahit
di man ngayon
Mamahalin mo rin
Mamahalin mo rin

Di pa siguro bukas
Di pa rin ngayon
Malay mo balang araw
Dumating din yon

In a nation burdened by pessimism, the struggling economy and worries about the peace and order situation, a song about the future, sung by an innocent, wistful voice, strikes a chord in each of us. The fact that the song is the comeback vehicle of a phenomenally successful, precociously loveable child star who'll forever have a soft spot in our hearts adds to its mystique.

"Pagdating ng Panahon" anticipates something good that will come tomorrow. It's theme is that love, when it's patient and pure, will one day be reciprocated.

These times call for something or someone that you can believe in. For most people it's becoming increasingly difficult to even long for a better life, a better paycheck, or a better career.

Love is the great equalizer. You can't buy it. Fame in now way assures you of it. Power won't insure its staying power. And beauty isn't enough of a guarantee you'll partake of it. Yet no one is immune to it, we all have a longing for it, we need to feel it and to share it.

"Pagdating ng Panahon" states a truth, depending on where you are at this point of your life, that will either be painful or inspiring. When it comes to the success of a love story, timing is of the essence.

The song doesn't castigate time. It doesn't wish to hasten time. It just embraces the moment "when the time will come."

We adopted "Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang" because it expressed a longing for someone who can't be ours because of present circumstances. It expressed a questioning of and a wish for rewriting our past.

Now we've moved a step up the ladder of emotional maturity in our appreciation of "Pagdating ng Panahon" because we now espouse the lovers' positive battle cry of faith in the possible good that tomorrow will bring.

***

I was a bit hoarse already during my taping last night because of a cold and cough that had started to develop. Of course, I must admit it also has to do with my inability to rest my vocal chords. Even if I talk for a living, I can never get enough conversation, be it face to face, on a landline or on my cell phones.

Today, I rested because I slept with a fever. I woke up feeling better, but I had to keep quiet to make sure I could go to my dinnertime taping later.

I've been reading a mournful yet thought-provoking love story by **Anita Shreve** titled "The Last Time They Met." Her approach is fresh, starting the story from a middle aged chance encounter of past lovers at a book festival where both writers are participants. The second part tracks their mid-twenties, all-consuming affair and the painful consequences it costs not only them, but their respective partners, innocent victims burned by their having stoked what were once embers of desire into an engulfing flame they couldn't control.

The third part of the book is set during what should be the time of promise in their lives, but already a time of survival, when they were both just 17.

The book is very creative because you can read just the first part and take that as "the last time they met." In a way, the meeting in their fifties is, ironically, the most hopeful. You can read on and let the second part be "the last time they met." The parting of ways when they are in their twenties is distressing, but poetically just.

The most heart-wrenching is to read the last part of the novel and ponder the tragic ending as being "the last time they met." I'll refrain from revealing more.

***

If you have a Smart cell phone, you should give the Smart Zed services a try. The choices are just so much fun.

Their huge, colorful full-page ads that appear almost daily in this newspaper have worked on me. Since I'm not talking today, downloading on my Smart is a welcome alternative.

I gave my horoscope reading a try. There's an option, according to the print ad that came out today, to find out what your "love horoscope" is by keying in "LH then your astrological sign."

I tried "LH Aquarius" several times but got no reading. 288 responded by texting me "ur horoscope: career (ch), teen (th), male (mh), female (fh). :zd." Maybe Smart Zed was just being truthful since I was just exhibiting some wishful texting.

I gave "fh aquarius" a try and got this as a reply: "Aquarius-A great guy pal whom you thought you knew so well is falling for you. Reevaluate your relationship for romantic possibilities."

All right, things are definitely looking up! Told you it was a kick, and for just P2.50, a great *pa-kilig* lift at that!

I also successfully downloaded some ringing tones. My current choice: Scooby Doo's theme song. The ringing tones and logos are P12 each.

'JURASSIC PARK III'

More dinosaurs eating more stupid people

BY RUBEN M. CRUZ JR.

REVIEW

A PLAGUE of sequels and remakes is afflicting Hollywood.

One is never sure of the reasons why these films are being made, except that their predecessors probably made enough of a killing at the tills to encourage one more comeback (in some cases, two more).

In terms of expectations, the odds are always stacked against these progenies, but sometimes there are the occasional exceptions, the follow-ups that best their predecessors.

"Jurassic Park III" or "J3" is not one of them, and there were signs that it wouldn't be. Steven Spielberg, who was at the helm of "Jurassic Park" and "The Lost World," this time, delegated the direction of the film to Joe Johnston ("Jumanji" and "Honey I Shrunk the Kids").

Johnston was Spielberg's visual effects designer on "Raiders of the Lost Ark" and George Lucas' on "Star Wars." Spielberg is still the executive producer of "J3," perhaps because, more than anything else, he'd be crazy to step away from a sure moneymaker like this.

Michel Crichton, on whose novels Spielberg's first two dinosaur films were based, has no direct participation in "J3." There is no third book from which the story could be adapted and only a character from Crichton's book (Dr. Alan Grant) is borrowed. So to come up with an original screenplay, three people were contracted—Peter Buchman, Alexander Payne and Jim Taylor.

Rumor was they were playing around with several scripts and that there was no final version even after the filming started. Whether that is true or not, the product is certainly a mess.

'Jurassic 4'

But what's the big deal? Don't we just want to see more dinosaurs eat more stupid people? I bet most people do. Spielberg is certainly betting on that as well. And if he's right, there'll probably be a "J4."

"J3" is an easy one to review. To explain the film's narrative, I can just borrow a line from Dr. Ian Malcolm, the eminent mathematician portrayed by Jeff Goldblum in "The Lost World."

Upon hearing the admiration of first-time dinosaur spectators—Julianne Moore and company—Malcolm remarked, "That's how it all starts. First there's ooohh!!! and aaahh!!! Then there's a lot of running and screaming."

Reverse the sequence and you have "J3."

The film has plenty of running and screaming sandwiching one ooohh!!! and aaahh!!! scene.

Here's another trouble-free digest: The people are more stupid, the dinosaurs nastier and bigger.

'Ooohh!!! Aaahh!!!'

My nephews and nieces asked me if there's anything new in "J3." So for the benefit of the other kids, here's the lowdown: T-Rex battles a superior brute—the Spinosaurus aegypticus—for supremacy in Isla Sorna; pteranodons (those winged dinosaurs) exhibit their aerial predatory skills; and the ooohh!!! and aaahh!!! moment—a herd of grazing brachiosaurs lording it over a wonderful panorama (I think that's what they are, since they look like Baylene, a dinosaur character from a Disney movie that is my son Jacob's current favorite).

Oh, by the way, those wily velociraptors make another comeback, providing some exciting chase scenes and unfortunately, also the dour, "that's it?" ending (they were made too sophisticated for their own good).

In between these attractions, boys and girls, you can leave your seats to take a pee, or buy some popcorn and soda for you and your friends. I assure you, you won't miss anything.

Characterization

A piece of unsolicited advice to the people at Universal Studios who might already be contemplating on "J4:" Next time, just scrap the human interest angle altogether and just have the dinosaurs carry out their carnage all the way.

I mean, why put above-par actors like Sam Neill, Tea Leoni and William Macy in a film if all you would have them do is run around another one of those so-called off-limits islands (no island ever really is in the "Jurassic" trilogy).

Do the writers think that the few times these people get to talk—when the dinosaurs just feed—can be construed as characterization? In "The Lost World," at least the characters had witty repartee or long-winded self-introductory monologues. In "J3," they're just dinner.

Neill, for instance, playing the returning Dr. Grant, is for the most part relegated to grunting obvious directives like "Run!" and "Stay still!"

'J3.' Spinosaurus reigns in the latest Jurassic sequel.

Pretentious

Hey, there's not much else you can do when a carnivore is staring you in the face. Not that more discourse would have mattered to this group of interlopers who are obviously clueless on Dinosaur Survival 101.

You'd think they know better than to steal eggs from the raptors or keep quiet when predators are stalking them, but that apparently is giving them too much credit.

Another idea for "J4's" future creators: If you really want a challenge, unleash a group of raptors against the Abu Sayyaf bandits in Basilan. If that's not possible, then just have veggies versus carnivores, or more predators against predators, or some other story that excludes human. Then at least you've scrapped the pretentiousness, because it's obvious that the real stars of this film are the dinosaurs, and that's how you want to play it.

Enough!

Dr. Grant's exposition on how the raptors could have been the dominant species on earth with their intelligence and cunning during the early-goings of the film is a dead giveaway of the feature presentation. And to paraphrase a line from "'Jerry Maguire:" you had me at the first 'Crunch!'"

So, please, enough of this charade at a good story or this pathetic attempt to induce a rooting interest in the characters. I know you're just trying to justify your actors' paychecks but that's so Jurassic One!

To Jim Mitchell, in charge of the special effects team, Stan Winston who's responsible for those remarkable dinosaur models, and stunts coordinator Michael Lantieri: Take a bow, gentlemen, for at least making this film watchable to a lot of kids, whether in age or mind. The images you created are the stuff of dreams.

As for "J4," I have a line from "J3" to describe it. "Some of the worst things imaginable have been done with the best intentions." That's from Neill's Dr. Grant, who I hope won't be back for another sequel.

A thrill a minute in the land down under

BY REMY M. UMEREZ

ON ITS fourth year, television's "Sports Unlimited" presents a thrilling six-part sports special which started airing July 7 and will end Aug. 11 on Channel 2.

"Sports Unlimited" goes back to the land down under (the first time was a special on the Olympics in Sydney) as hosts Dyan Castillejo and Marc Nelson view Australia up close.

Marc, a commercial model and a regular on "Keep on Dancing," was a shoo-in as host of the sports series, according to Dyan.

"It all happened by chance when we were invited to do a dance number for Keep on Dancing," Dyan says of her six-foot TV partner. "When Vince Hizon and David Bunevacz left the show, we had a hard time finding a replacement. It turned out Marc is a certified sports lover and is fond of underwater sports like scuba diving. He is also into gymnastics.

Rush

"(Marc) fits into the picture pretty well because our idea of a cohost is somebody who can talk about sports and participate in them. He turns out to be the adventurer we are looking for as he travels a lot as well."

As far as Marc is concerned, cohosting "Sports Unlimited" is a dream job because it is the kind of show he has been wishing for.

Dyan and Marc survey extreme Australia as they trek through Cairns in Queensland, and explore the Great Barrier Reef, as well as the Gold Coast, Noosoh, Mt. Koschusko and Canberra/Thredbo in New South Wales.

And that experience offered the kind of rush Dyan craves.

"We were going at back-breaking speed all the time, jumping from one place to another, shooting so many exciting stuff," she says. "The excitement level, on a scale of 1 to 10, was always 10. We met so many people who were enthusiastic to help us with each activity. Australians just love the great outdoors."

Fear of heights

Their adventure started with an encounter with an Aborigines tribe, the Tjapukai, who taught Dyan and Marc how to throw spears and boomerangs.

The pair then went bungee-jumping at 450 feet, as high as a 12-story building. How did Dyan, who has fear of heights, do it?

"The stuff we did like skydiving and bungee-jumping was something I said I would do for the future in 'Sports Unlimited,'" she says. "The time came, but I wasn't ready for it. Mentally I was so scared, yet I was willing to 'wing it.' I spoke intimately to Jesus before skydiving and bungee-jumping, in case it would be my last time. I was screaming a lot throughout the jump."

Scuba diving in the Great Barrier Reef was, for Dyan, an experience beyond description.

Marc and Dyan also rode the "Survivor" helicopter and took aerial shots of the incredible natural reef that spreads out for miles across the ocean.

Marc also did the extreme by jumping out of a plane at 14,000 feet. At 8,000 feet, his parachute opened and he rode the wind all the way to the ground.

Master of the waves

Dyan jumped from the plane at 12,500 feet at sunset in a little town called Teomberwah. It was the ultimate thrill for her as she took the leap from a 4-seater plane flying just above the clouds. She fell 5,500 feet in 45 seconds of free fall, which she found both terrifying and exhilarating.

On July 28, the special will feature Marc and Dyan surfing and kite surfing on Noosah beach, one of the world's best, with Chris Aboitiz (world tandem skiing champion) demonstrating his mastery of the board and the waves.

In this episode, "Sports Unlimited" introduces kite surfing, one of the newest water sports in Australia. Here Chris does his thing, handling and balancing a kite while riding a surfboard.

In Mt. Kosciousko, Queensland, the sports are camel-riding and abseiling, which is similar to rappelling.

"We went on a camel safari, riding through rainforests and a 42-mile beach—a unique journey with an endearing creature," Dyan says.

World champs

For the finale, it was snowskiing on the hills of Thredbo.

"I was introduced to a sport I've always wanted to try," Dyan says of snowskiing. "I know now why many of my European friends say it is one of the most thrilling sports."

In Canberra, they toured AIS (Australian Institute of Sports), the world's most envied sports training facility.

AIS is the ideal training ground for the serious athlete, making world champions of those who go there.

AIS features scientific techniques, sports medicine and nutrition science.

On the entertainment side, Marc and Dyan watched as the best dancers in Australia took part in the nation's premier dancesport competition.

COOL SPORT. Dyan Castillejo and Marc Nelson go snowskiing.

It is unlikely Dyan, Marc and the rest of the production staff of "Sports Unlimited" will easily forget their great Aussie adventure—at least not for a very long time.

"Sports Unlimited," directed by JV Noriega, with Jackie Castillejo as head writer, is replayed on SkyCable Channel 21 and Home Cable, Channel 32 at 7 p.m.

Sharon does retro ballads for the incurably romantic

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

I AM A "SHARONIAN" at heart. If some of you find that *baduy,* I don't even care.

I spent my high school and college life listening to Sharon's hits. And up to now, I can still vividly remember the famous and now-classic lines from her hit movies.

Back then when I first heard the strains of Sharon's first big hit, "Mr. DJ," written by the prolific **Rey Valera**, I sang and memorized the Tagalog ditty.

I am a frustrated singer. But at I.O., the only place where I can belt out a tune (much to the chagrin of my friends), I would choose Sharon's songs like "Sana'y Wala Nang Wakas," "Friend of Mine" and "Ikaw." My favorite, though, is "Sana'y Maghintay ang Walang Hanggan," which, sad to say, can't be found in any sing-along venue.

I sat on the front row of the theater—with all my seven other high school friends—on the first hour of the first day of showing of Sharon's movie debut, "Dear Heart," with her erstwhile hubby **Gabby Concepcion**. It was a full house. That's why we were left with no seats but on the front row. The success of the movie signaled Sharon's reputation as a box-office star.

Since then, I have faithfully followed Sharon's career. I have kept abreast with every major turn in her life, both personal and professional. I sympathized with her heartbreaks and her career's ups and downs.

I'm far from being a fanatic, but I never missed a **Sharon Cuneta** flick. And even now on cable TV, I never get tired of watching her romantic starrers.

Just last month, when Cinema One premiered "Minsan Minahal Kita" on SkyCable, I cried again even after I had seen the film twice.

"You made me believe," Sharon tells her costar **Richard Gomez** in a scene in their Tagaytay rendezvous after she learned of their botched plan to elope to the United States. The scene was a real three-hankie weepie.

More than the Sharon-Gabby movies, I am super thrilled in seeing a Sharon-Richard flick onscreen. I even bought the paperback version of "Minsan Minahal Kita," translated by **KC Cordero** and **Ofelia Concepcion**.

It has been more than a year since Sharon was last seen on the big screen. She was sidelined from acting when she got pregnant. And although there are projects lined up for her, she has yet to start filming any movie since she's determined to shed off those excess pounds after giving birth to baby Frankie.

Retro

But to compensate for her absence from the big screen, Sharon treats her fans to a new album of retro tunes, "Nothing I Want More."

The album took a little over a year to complete. In the inside front cover, Sharon wrote that she started recording it when she was trying to lose weight and praying for a baby. At that time, she was also filming "Minsan Minahal Kita."

However, two months after her movie with Richard was shown and she had achieved her ideal weight, Sharon found out she was pregnant. Then came the tragedy in her life when her dad, former Pasay City Mayor **Pablo Cuneta**, passed away.

She managed to complete work on the album early this year, after giving birth to **Frankie** in December.

"And what you have in your hands is the outcome of a most memorable year in my life," Sharon said.

"Nothing I Want More" is Sharon's first album in four years after she released "Mega Up Close" in 1997. But in her new album, Sharon is more adventurous in the arrangement and vocal rendition of songs. While all of the tracks were arranged by **Homer Flores**, Sharon has a slew of vocal arrangers who worked with her on the album, including **Louie Reyes**, The Company's **Moy Ortiz** and The Opera's **Sushi Reyes**.

Sharon takes her listeners to a nostalgic and romantic trip through the album. The retro mood is set with the opening cut, title track and carrier single, "Nothing I Want More," which is a revival of a **Tillie Moreno-Eugene Villaluz** duet.

Sharon sings tunes recorded mostly by male artists and that's another challenge for her. Who would have thought that a female recording artist would dare croon pop hits by international male singers?

Sharon renders near-flawless takes on **George Michael**'s "Careless Whisper," **Michael Jackson**'s "(She's) He's Out of My Life," **Stevie Wonder**'s "Overjoyed" and **John Farnham**'s "Please Don't Ask Me."

Manilow medley

She displays her vocal prowess in the medley of **Barry Manilow**'s "Even Now" and "Somewhere Down the Road," and the result is simply brilliant.

The Manhattan Transfer's "Smile Again" has been given a novel touch, laced with an ample dose of backup vocals.

"Maybe" was originally a duet by **Peabo Bryson** and **Roberta Flack**, but Sharon goes solo in the beautiful composition of **Burt Bacharach**.

She also does an upbeat take on "Don't Forget Me," far from the slow version she rendered several years back in "The Sharon Cuneta Show."

If we remember right, Sharon even cried buckets when she sang "Don't Forget Me" back then (because of Gabby?).

Sharon recorded "The Promise" again, which she earlier did in "Mega Up Close." But never mind, the song is also one of my big favorites, so I welcome its addition to "Nothing I Want More."

As most everyone probably knows, "The Promise" is the theme song of Sharon and her hubby, Sen. **Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan**. So let's give it to Sharon for re-recording the popular romantic ballad.

Sharon offers a smooth slice of inspirational music with the revival of **Basil Valdez**'s "Lift Up Your Hands." That's another ditty originally by a male singer here.

The tracks for "Nothing I Want More" are all glorious ballads and if you're an incurable romantic, the songs can make you pause and reflect on a present or previous romance or dalliances. The songs can make you smile, cry or simply feel romantic.

Here's bad news to album pirates. Sharon's CD veers away from the conventional packaging and comes in a specially designed crosswise notebook-like cover which is simply tough to copy. The album cover has also been made as the home page of Sharon's website.

"Nothing I Want More" has reached the platinum record mark—proof of Sharon's popularity as a recording artist. Very few performers can achieve success both in singing and acting. And Sharon makes it to the short list of names.

We leave the verdict to the music critics. But "Nothing I Want More" is an album of beautiful songs, which you won't get tired of listening to, whether you're at home, in the car or at work.

Sharon
nothing I want more

THE UNIQUE album cover of Sharon's "Nothing I Want More," which has been turned as the home page of the megastar's website.

Carlo plays challenging theater role

SINGER and recording artist Carlo Orosa loves the theater. The former Kundirana member discovered he had an uncanny knack for doing impersonations and started acting for the stage in the Metropolitan Theater's "The Great White Way" musical in 1986. There has been no stopping him since.

Today, Carlo is a sought-after solo act and theater artist in the country. Music maestro Ryan Cayabyab described him as "an excellent performer with clear, powerful tones coupled with a warm personality—onstage and off."

Carlo loves theater so much that he doesn't hesitate to take on relatively small, though substantial roles, because he believes in original Filipino productions—especially the kind that touches hearts and changes lives.

Trumpets is one of the few professional theater companies committed to this vision and Carlo has essayed numerous roles for them.

One such role is that of Nicodemus in the musical hit of 2000, "Little Mermaid." Carlo took on the role of the young mermaid's kind tutor because, he says, the character is unlike anything he's ever done before.

"Nicodemus is more serious than the other roles I've played, with dark secrets in his soul that he hides behind a lovable nature," Carlo explains. "When a character is finely drawn like that I don't mind even if it's a supporting one. In fact, I consider it a challenge to be able to bring out the depth and richness of this character within the limits of the role, and the time I have on stage."

He also relates to Nicodemus as a teacher, as well as best friend and confidant to the Little Mermaid.

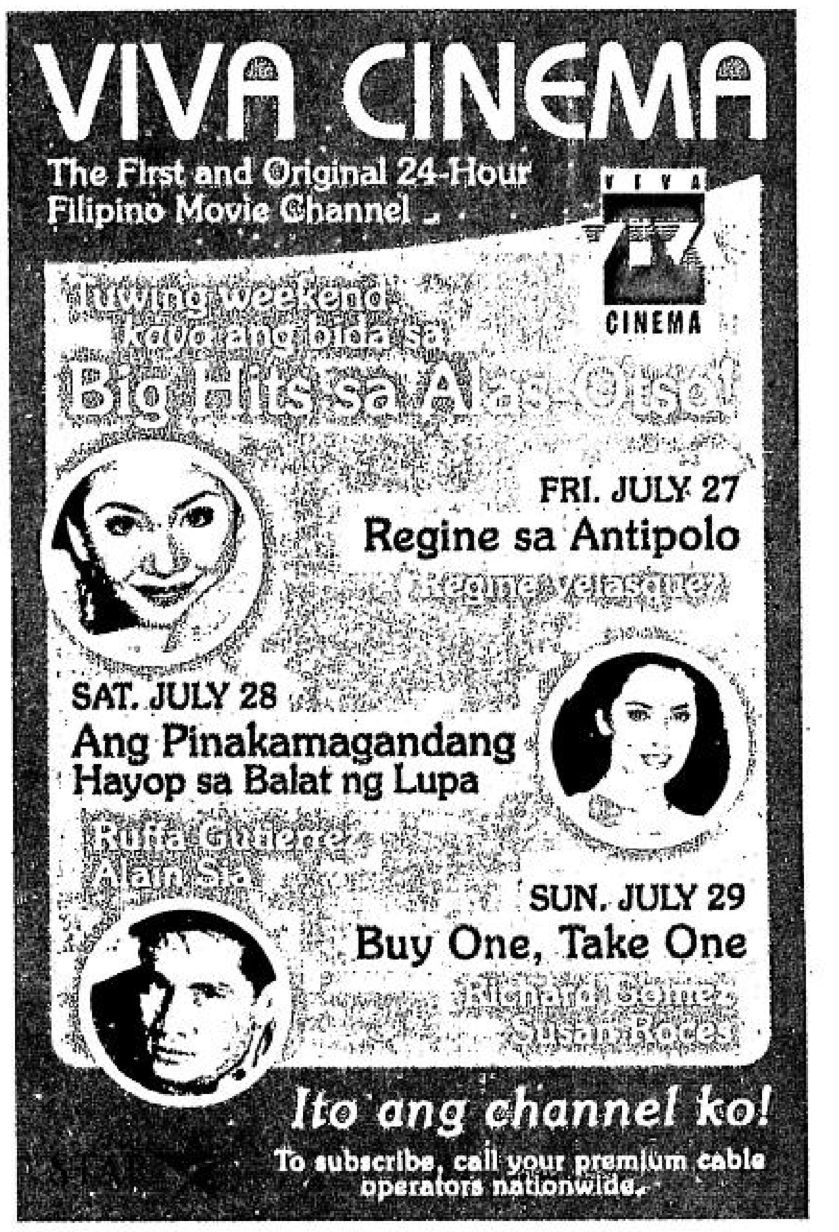
"I've taught young people myself in our summer theater Playshop. And the time you spend with the kids, you develop close friendships with them and learn what its like when they need guidance and discipline—just like what my young charge, Jewel, needs from me in the story."

As Nicodemus, Carlo gets to wear heavy prosthetic makeup making him unrecognizable on stage. "In last year's run, a lot of people in the audience were surprised to find my name in the souvenir program. They couldn't tell who was underneath all that makeup!"

In the restaging of "Little Mermaid," Carlo shares the stage with such exciting young luminaries as Carol Banawa and Dianne de la Fuente in the title role, and KC Concepcion as Princess Sapphire.

Catch Carlo and the cast of "Little Mermaid" at the Meralco Theater from Aug. 3 to Sept. 9. For tickets, call Trumpets at 633-5010 or NBS Ticketworld at 891-5610/ 891-5843.

OROSA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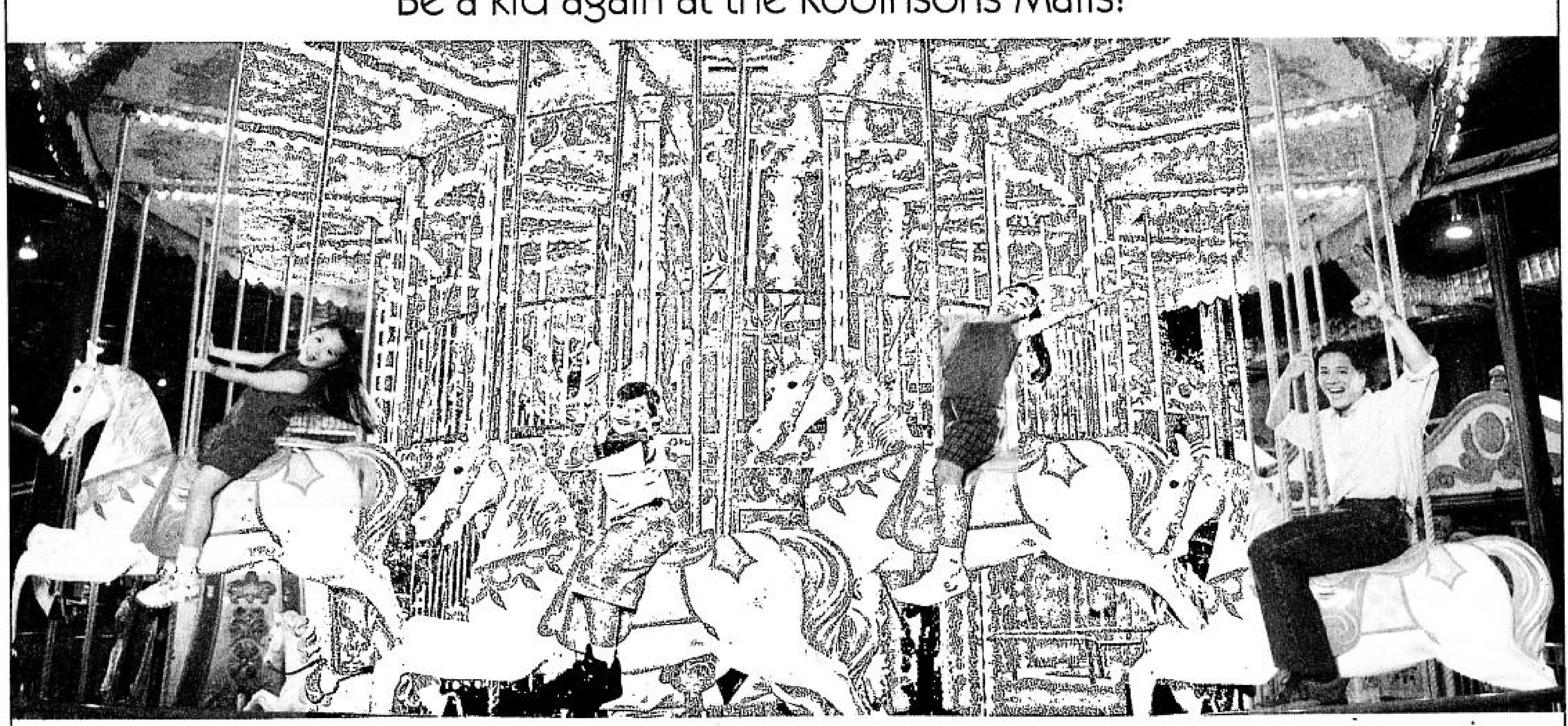

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ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	NAG-AAPOY NA LAMAN
QUEZON-1	JURASSIC PARK-3
REMAR	JURASSIC PARK-3
REMAR-2	PARUPARONG LIGAW

CUBAO

OCEAN SUPERAMA	BABAENG PUTIK
OCEAN CINEMA-A	PANABLA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-2	SWORDFISH

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	MAHAL KITA KAHIT...
CINEMA-2	NAG-AAPOY NA LANGIT
CINEMA-3	BAGANSYA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	TOMB RAIDER
CINEMA-6	PARO PARONG LIGAW
CINEMA-7	SWORDFISH
CINEMA-8	DRIVEN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	FINAL FANTASY
CINEMA-12	DR. DOLITTLE 2
CINEMA-14	TOM CATS
CINEMA-15	PANGAKO IKAW LANG

LORES

CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED

POWER PLANT CINEMA

CINEMA-1	DR. DOLITTLE-2
CINEMA-2	ALONG CAME A SPIDER
CINEMA-3	JURASSIC PARK-3
CINEMA-4	JURASSIC PARK-3
CINEMA-5	SWORDFISH
CINEMA-6	JURASSIC PARK-3

UNIWIDE METROMALL

(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	JULIETA
CINEMA-2	NANANABIK
CINEMA-4	SCARED

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	TOROTOT
CINEMA-2	KAKAIBANG KARISMA
CINEMA-4	ISA LAMANG ANG DAPAT MAHALIN

Assunta starrer premieres in UP

THE MUCH-awaited Assunta de Rossi launching picture, "Red Diaries," premieres at the UP Film Center on July 28, 7 p.m.

Sponsored by the DGPI and the UP Film Center, the Regal sex-drama flick rides the crest of excitement in the wake of Assunta's daring foray into the bold genre via a major starrer, under the helm of the highly-acclaimed Maryo J. de los Reyes.

"Red Diaries" tells the story of three different women, all of them played by Assunta de Rossi. One's a kept woman whose love affairs with many men end up in a bizarre triangle of illicit romances.

The other one's a homecoming maiden who crosses paths with a naïve teenaged seminarian whose recurrent wet dreams have her as the central object.

Then there's the battered wife who ultimately learns to regain her self-esteem and hatches a scheme against her violent husband.

"Red Diaries" also stars Carlos Morales, Anton Bernardo, Dante Rivero and Pilar Pilapil, with newcomers Jam Melendez and Dante Gomez.

'Tarzan' on Disney Channel

THE DISNEY animated blockbuster movie, "Tarzan," comes swinging to the Disney Channel tomorrow night, 8 p.m.

Based on Edgar Rice Burrough's immortal adventure classic, "Tarzan of the Apes," and energized by the driving rhythm of five songs by Grammy Award-winning singer-songwriter Phil Collins, "Tarzan" takes Disney Channel viewers on an imaginative fun-filled jungle excursion unlike any other.

Disney's "Tarzan" follows the adventures of an orphaned infant raised by a family of gorillas and ultimately accepted as one of their own.

Disney's "Tarzan" is directed by Chris Buck and Kevin Lima and features the voice talents of Tony Goldwyn, Minnie Driver, Glenn Close, Alex D. Linz, Rosie O'Donnell, Brian Blessed, Lance Henriksen, Wayne Knight and Nigel Hawthorne.

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JURASSIC PARK III

ACTION-ADVENTURE-SUSPENSE STARRING SAM NEILL, WILLIAM H. MACY, TEA LEONI, ALLESSANDRO NIVOLA, TRAVOR MORGAN AND MICHAEL JETER - PG-13 - RT-1:30

July 26-Thursday/
Friday/31-Tuesday

5:30 PM-JURASSIC PARK 3
8:00 PM- JURASSIC PARK 3
10:10 PM-JURASSIC PARK 3

Hear the Difference, Feel the Excitement

Costarring ventures

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

NOW that both **Jackie Chan** and **Jet Li** have become bankable stars in Hollywood, what's the next big step for them? Why, costar in one movie, of course.

That's why the two Asian martial arts stars have agreed to jointly develop a project for the California-based Revolution Studios.

But their proposed joint starrer will have to wait for quite a long time, because Chan will start shooting "Tuxedo" this September, with no less than **Steven Spielberg** producing.

As for Li, he's following up on his latest US film, "Kiss of the Dragon," with "Hero," a period epic in Chinese to be directed by none other than **Zhang Yimou** ("Raise the Red Lantern").

Meanwhile, **Julia Roberts** and **Catherine Zeta-Jones** are also costarring in the new film, "America's Sweet hearts," which is expected to be a blockbuster.

The film, which also stars **Billy Crystal** and **John Cusack**, is about Hollywood stars brightly promoting a new movie even as their personal lives are falling apart.

Its inspiration is the time when **Elizabeth Taylor** was having an affair with **Richard Burton** on the set of "Cleopatra," while she was still very much married, albeit unhappily, to **Eddie Fisher**.

Roberts and Zeta-Jones can topbill a movie alone and come up with a hit, so their costarring move in "America's Sweetheart" is seen as a double-whammy that should make the movie one of the biggest hits of the year.

From 'Survivor' to screen stardom

WHEN **Colleen Haskell** competed in the first edition of CBS' "Survivor" last year, she didn't expect anything to come out of that experience, except possibly winning the game-adventure show's $1M prize money.

Well, she didn't become a millionaire, but she did get a lot of show biz offers. One of them was the role of Rianna in the **Rob Schneider** starrer, "The Animal," and she decided to accept it.

In the film, Haskell plays a young woman who works as a volunteer at an animal shelter. She falls in love with Schneider's character, not knowing that he's been operated on by an eccentric doctor and his body is full of animal organs. Soon, he's making friends with a goat, fighting with cats, and instead of kissing Rianna, he licks her face!

Haskell didn't have a hard time acting in her first film because she has a degree in theater from the University of Georgia.

Fund-raising concert

THE UNIVERSITY of Life's Pharos organization of the School of Education is holding a concert titled "Simply Broadway" at the school's Celestino Dizon Auditorium at 7 p.m. today, July 27, to raise funds for the organization's various projects.

The talents featured include Dr. **Ferdie Tablan, Marie Puyat, Pam Imperial, Ikey Canoy, Trish Hizon, Nick Manahan, Frances Espinosa, Alvin Castillo** and **Justin de la Cruz**. They will perform numbers from "Rent," "Cats," "Jekyll and Hyde," "Ragtime," "Phantom of the Opera," "She Loves Me Not," "Pippin," "Ms Saigon" and "Les Miserables."

For tickets, call **Tricia Castro** at 634-7224 and 23. Tickets are also available at the gate.

Films on HBO

HBO movie channel will screen some interesting films in August: Aug. 1, 9 p.m., "The Prince of Egypt," an animated feature from DreamWorks. Aug. 2, 9 p.m., "Bowfinger" with **Steve Martin** and **Eddie Murphy**. Aug. 5, "Saving Private Ryan" with **Tom Hanks** and **Matt Damon**.

Aug. 9, 9 p.m., "RKO 20," on the making of **Orson Welles'** "Citizen Kane." Aug. 11, 9 p.m., "Sleepy Hollow" with **Johnny Depp** and **Christina Ricci**. Aug. 15, 9 p.m., "Stop! Or My Mom Will Shoot!," a comedy starring **Sylvester Stallone** and **Estelle Getty**. Aug. 26, 9 p.m., "Silverado" with **Kevin Costner, Kevin Kline** and **Danny Glover**.

Correction

"BETTE," the new sitcom starring **Bette Midler**, is being shown on Studio 23, not on RPN-9, as we erroneously wrote earlier this month. "Bette" can be viewed on Studio 23 every Sunday at 8 p.m.

Bar tour

THE GORGEOUS models of Mild Seven are out to check the bar scene again this weekend. The group is ready to give away great prizes and cool items as they go bar-hopping around Pasig and Makati.

Tonight, they will visit Pasig night spots like 8th Day, Tequila Joe's, Friends, Ten Years After, San Mig, Congo Grille, Watering Hole and WhistleStop.

Feel the heat of the exciting games and gimmicks the Mild Seven models have prepared for all bar habitues.

Lucky guests will get a chance to roll a dice and play the "Any of Seven Dice Game." The winning number on the dice will win Mild Seven premium items such as lighters, pens, caps, shirts and ashtrays.

Tomorrow night, the Mild Seven models will be in Makati as they roam Jazz Rhythms, Windows Café in Rockwell, H2O, Hutu's Hut, Cork, Che Cigar, Street Life, Hard Rock Cafée, Cable Car in Pasay Road and Glorietta, Padi's Point in Jupiter, Pasay Road and Mile Long, Decades in Mile Long, Grilla, WhistleStop and Reasons.

Concert series

THE COMIC tandem of Porky and Choppy, better known as the Porkchop Duo, will perform in a mini-concert series tonight and on July 30 at Downtown Music Bar and Restaurant at Hotel Rembrandt.

The Porkchop Duo's repertoire includes stand-up comedy and musical numbers of Top 40, standards, ballads and modern songs.

The duo's show at Downtown is a much-applauded entertainment extravaganza. It was recently taped and produced on a VCD format and is now available in record and video stores nationwide.

Other notable performers at Downtown are Joy Viado in "Acoustic Daw" on July 28 and Moonstruck on July 31.

Downtown offers a "Six-2-Nine" special promo on local beers.

The "Rack Your Bills" promo is still ongoing.

Downtown Music Bar at Hotel Rembrandt is along Tomas Morato extension, Quezon City.

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

DR. DOLITTLE 2 - GP 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30	ALONG CAME A SPIDER - P 13 11:30, 1:30, 3:40, 5:50, 8:00, 10:10	JURASSIC PARK 3 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 5:30, 7:10, 9:20
JURASSIC PARK 3-P13 12:00, 2:10, 4:20, 6:30, 8:40, 10:40	SWORDFISH - R18 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50	JURASSIC PARK 3-P13 11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00

Matinee: P80, Mon.-Fri, 11:10 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.

FOURTH WEEK
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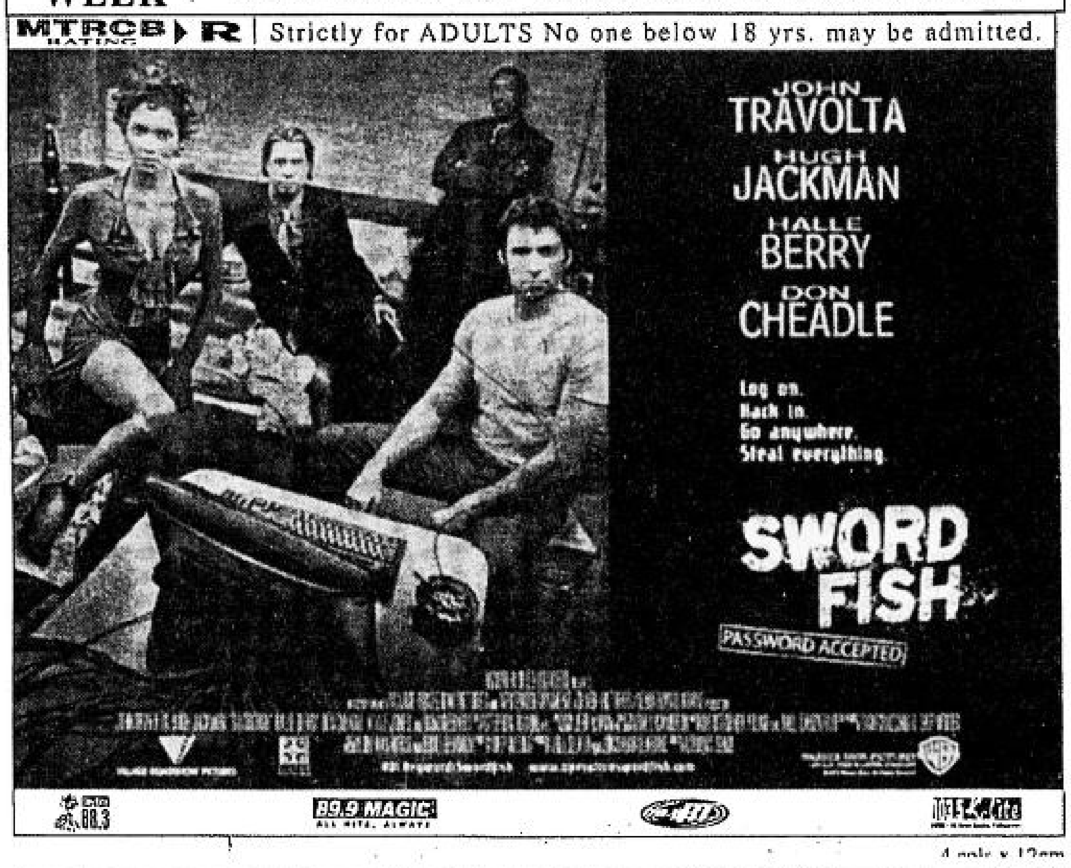

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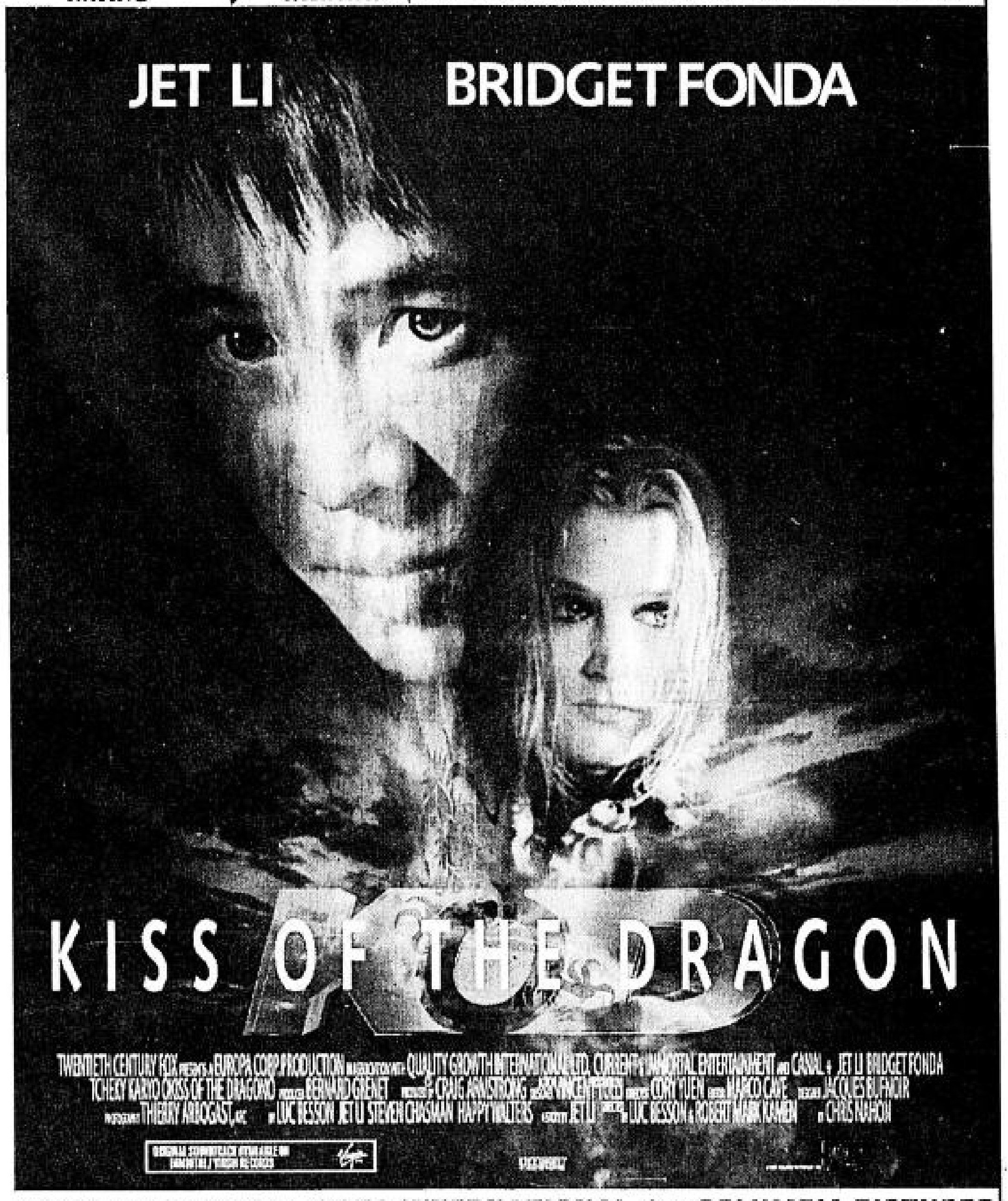

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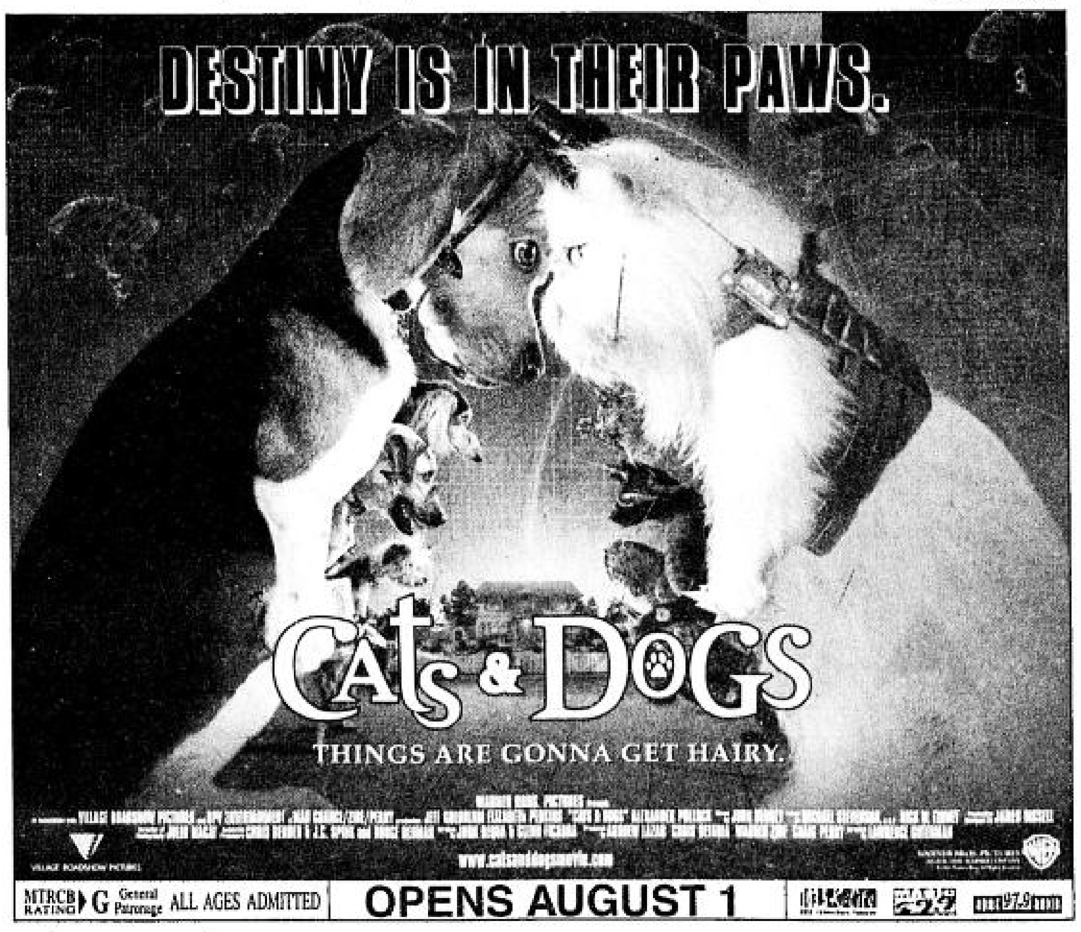
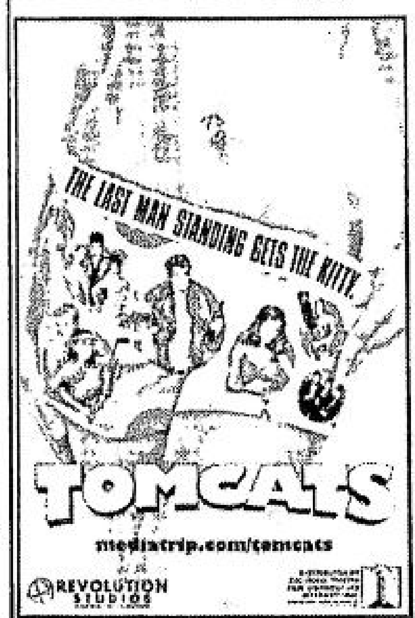


MTRCB RATING G General Patronage ALL AGES ADMITTED
OPENS AUGUST 1

MTRCB R Restricted Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.



2ND SEXY DATE MOVIE WEEK!

Introducing, the "Tomcats," tropa ng free-wheeling, sex-obsessed guys, na walang inatupag kung hindi maka-iskor at magbilang ng nobya.

Nagpustahan ang barkada – sino ang huling barako na di patatali sa pag-aasawa?

Matapos ang ilang taon, sina Michael (Jerry O'Connell ng JERRY MAGUIRE) at Kyle (Jake Busey ng STARSHIP TROOPERS) na lang ang natitirang bachelor sa grupo.

Upang manalo sa pusta, ise-set up ni Mike si Kyle with super-seductive Natalie (Shannon Elizabeth ng SCARY MOVIE, AMERICAN PIE). Nguni't di niya inaasahan na maiinlab din pala siya sa sexing dalaga. Manalo man siya sa pusta, maglalaho naman ang true love niya!

Silipin din sa hilarious sexy comedy from Columbia Pictures sina Playboy playmates Julia Schultz at Amber Smith. Rated R.

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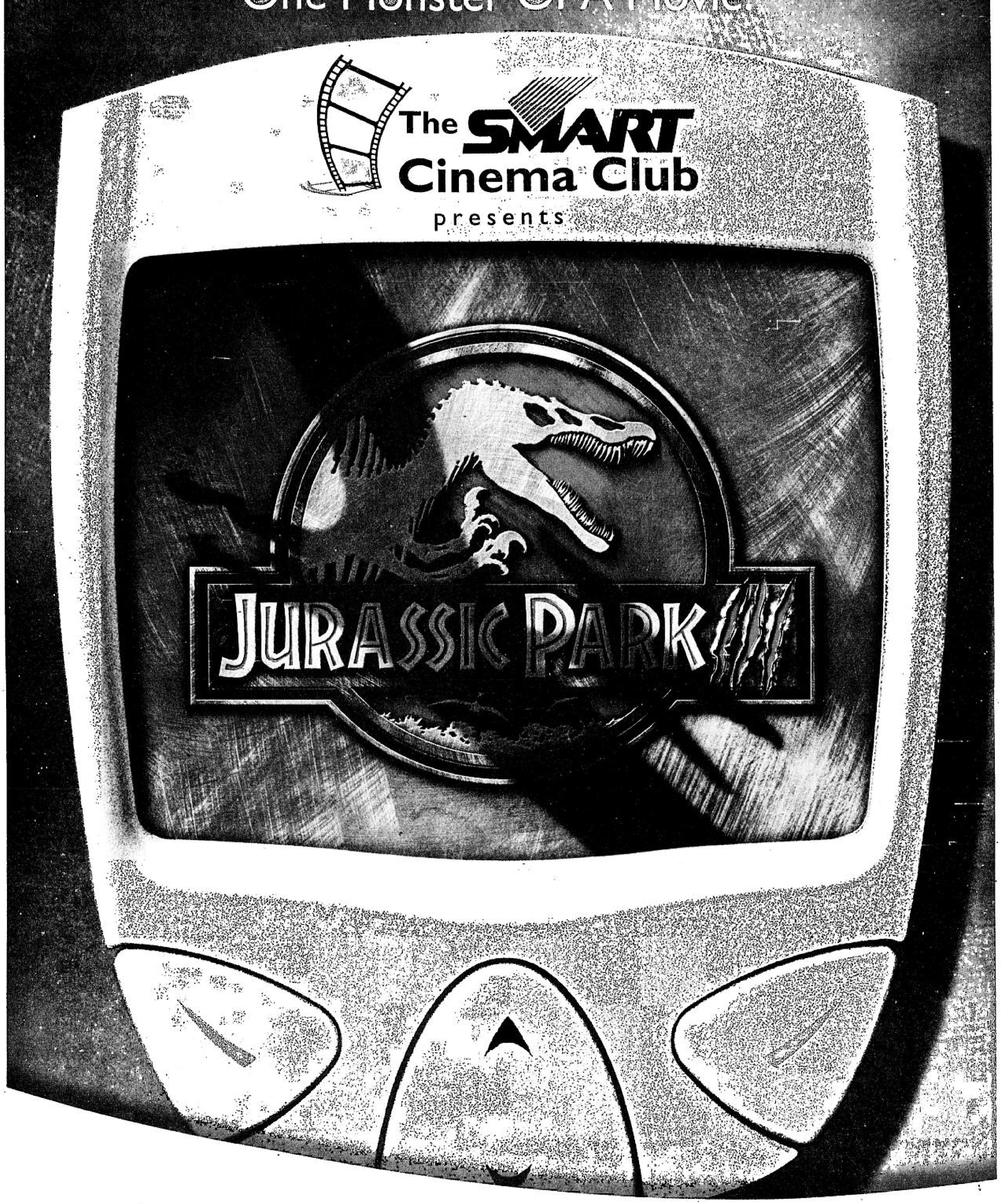

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GROUP GRAPHICS*:
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JURASSIC PARK III GAME:
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PICTURE MESSAGES*:
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FRIDAY, JULY 27, 2001 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER B1

BUSINESS

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ■ CORRIE S. NARISMA, Assistant Editor

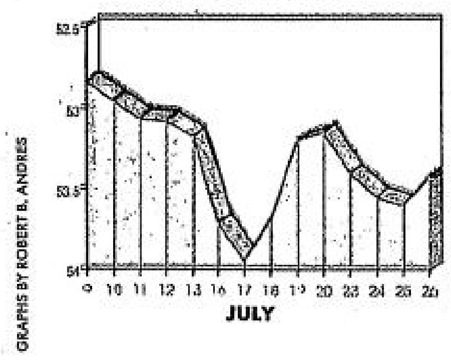
Equitable PCI
BANK
MEMBER PDIC

BSP hikes bank reserve requirement

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



Peso-Dollar Rate

₱53.42 = $1
As of 5 p.m., July 26, 2001

¥ 123.24 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 123.24 as of 5 p.m., July 26, 2001

GOLD:$268.10/268.60
per ounce Hong Kong, July 26, 2001

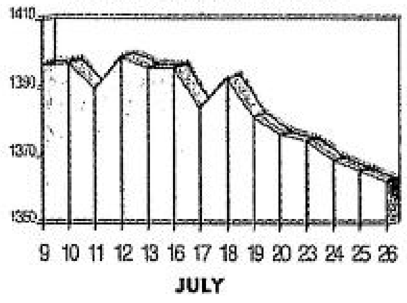
STOCK MARKET

Stocks continue to slide

SHARES finished lower yesterday, with the main index setting a fresh nine-month low with no positive fundamentals to boost market interest, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended down 3.43 points, or 0.3 percent, at 1,362.58 points, its lowest level since Oct. 31, when the index ended at 1,287.85 points. The index has already lost 2.2 percent since July 19.

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B2)

STOCKS/ B5

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE POLICY-MAKING Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday raised the reserve requirement on banks by two percentage points to 18 percent and brought down the ceiling for undocumented dollar transactions by half to $5,000 for every client.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the twin measures, which take effect today, were meant to ease the pressure on the peso as well as to keep inflation in check. The peso yesterday closed 18 centavos stronger at 53.42 to a dollar.

The central bank raised the liquidity reserve requirement on deposits, deposit substitutes, liabilities, common trust fund, and trust and other fiduciary liabilities of commercial lenders and quasi-banks to 9 percent from 7 percent. The statutory requirement was kept at 9 percent, bringing the total to 18 percent.

Buenaventura said the BSP had exempted thrift banks and rural banks from the higher reserve requirement so as not to restrain lending to small and medium enterprises.

"There is also no justification for an increase in bank lending rates because the intermediation cost would hardly go up," the central bank governor said.

The BSP estimates that the two-percentage point rise in reserves will mop up P27.4 billion in excess money from the system that otherwise could lead to a higher inflation in the coming months or could be used by banks to speculate against the peso.

Banks now have to set aside 18 centavos for every peso of their loanable funds and keep these in the central bank's vaults where these earn varying interest rates.

As expected, the BSP kept its overnight borrowing and lending rates unchanged at 9 percent and 11.25 percent. The plan to remove the incremental interest on bank deposits with the BSP and pay a flat 9 percent was not pursued.

The central bank pays 9-percent interest on bank deposits worth up to P5 billion. The next P5 billion in deposits up to P10 billion earn a lower interest of 7.5 percent and deposits in excess of P10 billion carry an interest of 6 percent.

"Clearly, we see no need to raise overnight rates nor should we bring it down," Buenaventura said.

Raising interest rates to protect the peso and mop up excess liquidity was more harmful to the economy because it would tend to jack up bank lending rates as well as the government's cost of borrowing.

The BSP chief pointed out that raising the reserve requirement would be more costly for the central bank because it would have to shell out more to pay interest on the higher bank deposits.

Buenaventura pointed out that in May, domestic liquidity had increased by 14.7 percent when the growth in the gross domestic product in the first quarter stood at only 2.5 percent.

The central bank governor explained that the BSP's target of letting domestic liquidity grow by 15 percent by year's end was premised on a GDP growth projection ranging from 3.8 to 4.3 percent.

The GDP growth target was already reduced to a range of 3.3 to 3.8 percent.

San Miguel, RFM near deal on Cosmos buyout

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

FOOD and beverage groups San Miguel Corp. and RFM Corp. yesterday obtained approval from their respective board of directors to finalize the latter's sale of its 83.2-percent stake in profitable soft drink unit Cosmos Bottling Corp.

In separate statements, SMC and RFM said their management had been authorized to negotiate for the joint acquisition by Coca Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. and its parent company Atlanta-based Coca Cola Co. of Cosmos.

In its statement, SMC said it was continuing to discuss with Coke Atlanta, its partner in CCBPI, for a joint acquisition of Cosmos.

SMC owns a 65-percent stake in CCBPI while Coke Atlanta controls the remaining 35 percent.

"No agreements have been reached with either Coke Atlanta or RFM as to price, structure or other details," the SMC statement said.

The deal is estimated to be worth between P12 billion and P15 billion, although there was an earlier indicative price of P14.5 billion, inclusive of a P2.5 billion "goodwill" fund to be paid as dividend to stockholders.

RFM, for its part, has tapped Dutch financial giant ING Barings as its financial adviser on the discussions with the SMC group.

The RFM board authorized the company president and CEO Jose A. Concepcion III to draft and sign the memorandum of understanding with the SMC group.

The acquisition of Cosmos by SMC will further solidify the food and beverage giant's control of the soft drink market. CCBPI already controls 60 percent of the market while Cosmos, the next biggest bottler, has close to 30 percent.

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	Wagon	₱ 1,710.000	₱ 855,000	₱ 47,500	ZERO% INTEREST
VECTRA 2.0L A/T	Sedan	₱ 1,165.000	₱ 582,500	₱ 32,362	ZERO% INTEREST
	Wagon	₱ 1,245.000	₱ 622,500	₱ 34,583	ZERO% INTEREST
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Per DTI NCR Permit #2240 Series of 2001

LOSING OPERATIONS

US software firm leaves RP

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

A LEADING American software developer, Complete Business Solution Inc. (CBSI), has shut down its loss-making Philippine subsidiary as part of its company's cost-cutting program in the face of a weakening US economy.

CBSI, which had previously closed its Australian subsidiary, has decided to concentrate its offshore development center in Bangalore, India, which has substantially lower costs than the Philippines. India is the Philippines' main rival in IT services.

CBSI has decided to concentrate its operations in India, where it has been operating for the last 10 years, in order to maximize its manpower and investments.

The Board of Investments has approved CBSI Philippines Inc.'s petition to cancel its registration because of mounting losses since it began operations in 1999.

The BOI did not demand a refund of incentives granted to CBSI Philippines because the company did not avail itself of any fiscal perks, particularly the four-year income tax holiday, because it has been in the red in the past two years. CBSI Philippines has complied with the BOI's 70-percent export requirement and it has generated $1.254 million in net foreign exchange earnings.

CBSI Philippines could not adjust the billing rate imposed by its Michigan headquarters and it was not possible to raise its rates because orders would move to India, which was already charging lower rates.

CBSI claimed that its cost-cutting move was triggered by the economic slowdown in the United States. The company was also affected by the company's reorganization at home where its top officers were replaced when it underwent a major overhaul. The company is now known as Covansys.

CBSI was supposed to enter into a joint venture with Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. to provide IT services to the banking and financial sectors.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit # A3-421 Series of 2001

Prodigal Sona

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

NOW that was really cute! But what did you expect? It could only come from this cute administration.

Of all the many wonderful things floating in the Pasig River, including dead people, what should reach Malacañang—of all places along the long river?

Well, based on Gloriaetta's first Sona, they were paper boats. Surprise! They turned out to be . . . well, letters. Not only that, the letters were addressed to her personally.

The boat letters came from three children, all of them boys. They were so poor, they thought of writing to her for help. Sure, poor boys write to presidents all the time.

Apparently, those three boys walked all the way from the Payatas dumpsite in Quezon City to send letters via the Pasig River. Payatas is a long, long way from the river.

Really, the cute Sona of this cute administration should beat any television daytime soap. What do we call it—the Prodigal Sona?

* * *

BUT what's incredulous to me is not how Gloriaetta could still read those letters. They must have been soaking wet, and thus smudged, since they were fished out of the water.

Some people cannot bear gimmickry. Gloriaetta's probably even invited disbelief, if not sneers. It was so dramatic, you expected to hear violins in the background.

Me, I think we need a little drama at times. Gloriaetta used a little drama in her first Sona. I can live with it. Only, the Sona could be taken as just all that—drama!

For what amazed me in the Sona was the endless list of top priorities. At this time, it is said in business, we need focus. All right, she may be focusing on a million things.

* * *

GLORIAETTA is the first President to advocate plain talk in the Sona. She also wants to use common sense in devising a one-year program of government. Let me see . . .

There's the Modified Gross Income Tax. Personal Equity Retirement Act. Investment Company Act. Securitization Act. B-O-T. Grameen Bank. Very plain indeed!

Yet she would rather stay quiet on certain big issues. Not a word was said about the hidden Marcos billions. It can help finance her million priorities, you know.

And what about wage increase? What about dollar speculation? For these, all she could do was simply make an appeal to the business community.

Look at that—a plea! From the highest official of the land! Who has a million things to do with little time and even lesser resources!

Somehow I can easily look up to a leader who, when it comes to something good for me, will use all her power to make it happen. I don't want her to beg anybody!

* * *

ANY which way Gloriaetta's husband, Miguel Arroyo, goes in this brewing controversy over loose change of P50 million, he is bound to get it in the . . . well, you know where.

As you know, the opposition calls for a Senate investigation of alleged bribery inside the Palace, involving Mike the Knife, as claimed by a former Palace insider.

Now Mike was scheduled to fly to the United States yesterday. Believe me, people will see in his trip whatever they want to see—good or bad!

Some people may think that he was only trying to run away from the Senate investigation. He must therefore be guilty one way or another.

Others may say that, since he did not cancel the trip, he was not bothered by the issue at all. The First Gentleman must be clean!

So at this time, only this much is clear: Whether he likes it or not, he must deal with the issue in the Senate probe. Or he will deal with Gloriaetta. No! Erase! Delete!

* * *

IN business, anyway, many still cannot believe that, even in her first Sona, Gloriaetta said nothing about their biggest problem. You know—the flood of imports!

Dumping of steel from Russia killed National Steel Corp. Imported tires assured the death of

BREAKTIME/ B3

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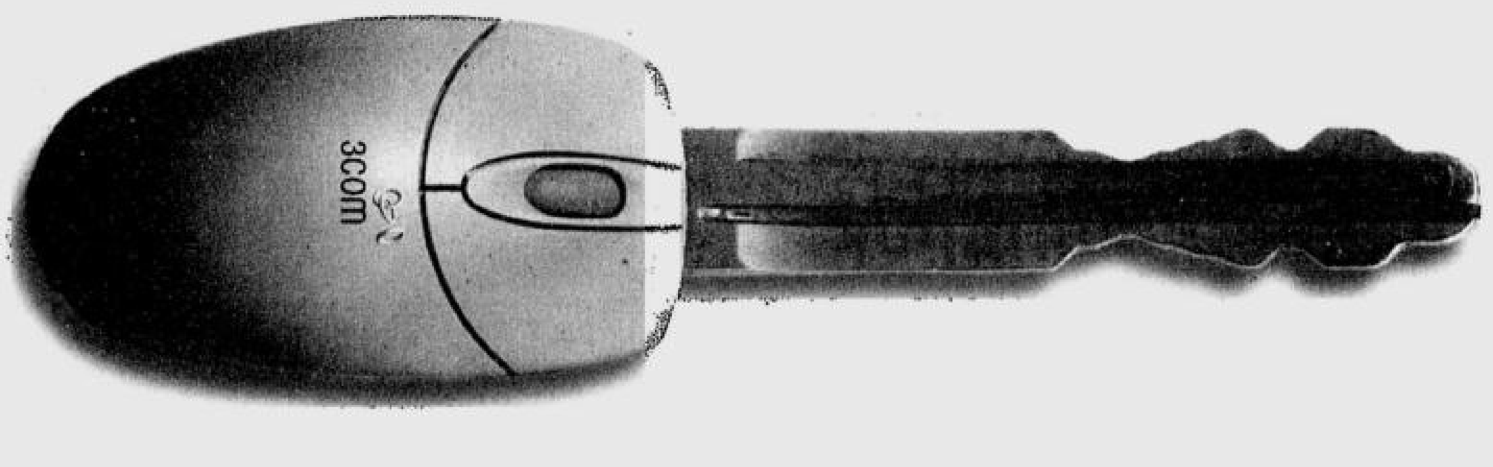
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GMA, Gloria, Mike and Bing

COCKTALES

By Victor C. Agustin

AFTER being praised by Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for its 30-minute driver's license, the Land Transportation Office under Edgardo Abenina is next introducing a GMA Lane program for traffic enforcers.

A play on the President's initials, GMA in LTO lingo stands for—we are not kidding—*Gawin Mo Agad.*

Like the rush to FVR and Erap-initialed programs before, the different government agencies are trying to out-*sipsip* each other again in cooking up programs designed to win *pogi* points from the current Malacañang occupant.

Even the private sector has caught on the fever, if we go by the account of our spy, S. Cuttle Butt.

For example, to perk up flagging consumer demand in its Makati malls, the Ayalas repainted their Erap road signs with Gloria messages, for "Glorietta Lowers Outrageous Rents In August."

Not to be outdone, the Globe president, after hearing the State of the Nation Address, sent a text message to his Smart counterpart: G-L-O-R-I-A it read, for "Good Luck On Reported Interconnection Arrangement." This instead begot a combative G-L-O-R-I-A reply: "Globe Locks out Other Radio signals In Ayala."

Over at Binondo, the President's personal publicist Dante Ang has, unknown to the President, quietly started among the Chinoy community his GMA drive, for "Give Money Always." Fortunately, the Chinese-Filipino businessmen have been quite used to the slogan, which they think originated from the police. (Many of them, in fact, are Lacson rooters and that, contrary to what columnist Ramon Tulfo says, PING stands for Panfilo Is Not Gay.)

The GMA directive was what also caused, according to S. Cuttle Butt, the bitter falling out between the First Gentleman and the President's former correspondence secretary.

The First Gentleman, in a fit, accused the Rodrigo girl of committing a B-I-N-G (*Bakit Ikaw Nakaw Gloria?*). The Rodrigo girl, in return, hotly retorted that the Arroyo husband was being a M-I-K-E (*Masyado Ikaw Kupit, Eh!*).

Now you understand why Mr. Arroyo was quickly given the S-O-N-A treatment, Shipped Overseas to Neutralize Allegations.

Café con Starex

OVER at the sequestered Channel 13, their favorite coffee shop also serves, would you believe, Starex vans and Nissan cars?

In the dying days of the Erap administration, the IBC-13 board led by Ma. Elisa Anson Roa, Jorge Sarmiento and Renato Bello approved an offsetting arrangement with Twenty Plus Corp., a coffee shop whose last reported capitalization was P30,000.

Instead of food, Twenty Plus paid the TV station two Starex vans to partially settle about P59.7 million worth of infomercials it had obtained from Channel 13.

Nothing wrong with that, except that these Starex each cost P1.43 million, when the same vans, even at the present P53.60-$1 exchange rate, cost only P900,000 each.

Another Starex van supplied late last year to Channel 13 also by the same coffee shop was billed at P1.523 million.

Wait, there is more.

Two Mitsubishi Adventure GL were also supplied by the coffee shop for P1.07 million each, when the canvassed price at that time for the passenger van was only P570,000/unit.

One Nissan Exalta STA was also supplied to the TV station for P1.898 million, when the prevailing canvassed price for the car was P785,000.

Who are the lucky guys behind Twenty Plus?

Jose Alejandro and Alfredo Reyes of Dasmariñas Village, Ricardo and Ma. Elena Garcia of BF Resort Las Piñas, and Fernando and Franklin Alido of BF Homes Parañaque are listed as the coffee shop's incorporators.

A check with the Securities and Exchange Commission showed that Twenty Plus has not filed any audited financial statement since it was incorporated in 1995.

Denials and clarifications

o TAIPAN John Gokongwei and Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez both denied that they were present in the Malacañang meeting (Cocktales, 25 July) where then President Estrada ordered the six-taipan consortium to drop their opposition and allow the Piatco group to build the new Naia Terminal 3.

• VALENZUELA RTC Judge Floro Alejo has not granted the two TRO petitions filed by the steel and cement importers group against the Department of Trade, contrary to what was reported in Cocktales on Wednesday. Both petitions are still pending before the same court.

Heard through the grapevine

IF you want to know more details about the bolched Jaime Dichaves telecom monopoly deal, the person to ask is none other than Mike Arroyo's classmate, Honorio Poblador III.

Poblador, along with fellow Erap appointees Pacifico Marcelo (the Dichaves pointman in the aborted franchise deal) and lawyer Federico Agcaoili in the sequestered Philcomsat board, were working on a similar telecom arrangement until it was taken over by Edsa II.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Breaktime

(From page B2)

local rubber plantations. The cement industry is next.

No wonder, the local cement plants are asking Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas for a 200-day imposition of higher tariff on imported cement.

But is anybody listening? It seems that to earn *pogi* points with the so-called consumers, this cute administration would rather let the industry go down.

Only four years ago in 1997, imported cement accounted for zero—yes, nothing, nil, zilch—of our market. Today, imports enjoy 25 percent, thanks to our masochism.

* * *

YOU see, apparently because this country enjoys being beaten, our government pared tariff on imports to only 3 percent. In our neighbors, it's between 30 and 50 percent.

The reasoning behind such wide disparity was, well, it should be good for the consumers. The tariff cut should be passed on to us, assuming we have use for cement.

I am glad to report to you, my countrymen, that such is not happening. For the imported cement is sold at the same price as local cement.

The landed cost of imported cement is estimated at P86 per bag. Wishing to help consumers, the importers simply charge P135 to P150 per bag.

Who benefits then? Making a killing are the importers who either have short family names or have foreign principals. Superb, no?

Meanwhile, in danger of losing their jobs are thousands of workers in the cement industry. It so happens that several cement plants are located in Mindanao.

Where is the government in all this? Out there trying to get best performance awards for drama in a Sona, I guess.

Manila Mining suspends Surigao gold operations

By Doris C. Dumlao

MANILA Mining Corp., one of the country's oldest mining firms, has suspended its gold operations in Surigao del Norte due to continued losses.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, MMC president Artemio Disini said the operations of the company's Heine Pit were shut down starting last Monday when the temporary license to construct and operate ponds from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources expired.

"During the shutdown, the company will be maintaining a reduced workforce and temporarily lay off about two-thirds of its employees," the statement said.

"The work during the shutdown will focus on extensive drilling, which will convert the large inventory of resource to ore reserves and prepare the mine for better operations," it said.

The Heine Pit, where gold bullions are produced, accounts for about half of the company's total revenue.

But MMC said it would continue to operate the Natina Pit in the area and produce gold and copper concentrates in order to earn enough to cover operating costs and prevent the mine from totally shutting down and laying off more than 1,300 employees and contractors.

The statement noted that the company's failure to raise tailing pond due to protests from a group led by local priests had imposed a heavy toll on its finances and operations. The protests, it said, prevented vital workers and much-needed supplies from entering the mine camp and thus resulted in a critical delay in the pit development work.

"In November 2000, the full effect of the delay in pit development became apparent when more than two million metric tons of waste in the Heine Pit that otherwise should have been previously removed, slipped over to the ore zone during the height of typhoon Toyang," it said.

"The waste material cannot be removed now without spending millions of pesos, making the future operations of the Heine Pit unprofitable."

But the company stressed that the suspended tailing pond was always in compliance with standards set by the DENR, the Bureau of Mines and Geosciences and the Environmental Management Bureau. It said the pond had "adequate safeguards against dam failure up to its final design of 70-meter elevation."

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Proposed deal to give gov't, Tan equal stakes in PNB

By Elena R. Torrijos and Clarissa S. Batino

THE GOVERNMENT is pushing for a "compromise" arrangement with taipan Lucio Tan on the proposed "reverse" privatization and rehabilitation of Philippine National Bank.

An INQUIRER source said the arrangement would give both parties equal stakes of 44 percent each in the bank and that the Tan group was amenable to this.

He said the proposed arrangement calls for the conversion into equity of P7 billion to P8 billion of the government's P25-billion exposure in PNB. It also calls for a commitment from both the government and Tan to jointly sell their stakes after three years.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, for his part, said yesterday that Tan must give up part of his control in PNB and allow the government to convert a portion of the P25 billion loans into equity to pave for the rehabilitation of the ailing bank.

"I am confident that we will be able to convince him to approve the debt to equity conversion plan," said the finance secretary.

The INQUIRER source said the debt would be converted into government equity at the amount close to the government's proposal of P40 per share.

He added that the government was willing to settle as much as P10 billion of its past due loans to PNB through either a write-off of PDIC's P10-billion exposure in PNB or through outright payment.

Under the proposal, the source said, the government would have a dominant role in managing the bank although the choice of a president would be a joint decision.

He said Tan was amenable to the plan and that it was being cleared with certain Cabinet members.

Camacho said converting part of the government's emergency loans to PNB amounting to P25 billion—P15 billion extended by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and P10 billion by the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.—was an integral part of the bank's rehabilitation.

The conversion of its debts into government equity will free more funds that can be used by the bank for lending and for other investments that can help the bank improve its financial position. Last year, the bank posted a net loss of almost P6 billion.

Currently, the country's sixth largest lender is shelling out millions of pesos a month to pay the interest charges on the emergency loans from the BSP and PDIC.

Sources earlier said Tan had refused to give up part of his majority control of PNB but had agreed to yield management control to the government.

Camacho said the government led by PDIC chief Norberto Nazareno would continue to hold dialogues with Tan and his representatives to thresh out the details of the debt-to-equity conversion plan.

The government has been negotiating with the taipan's lawyers since mid-May. The government earlier said it wanted to retake less than 51 percent of PNB through the debt-to-equity conversion plan.

Nazareno said that once Tan agrees to give up part of his stake in PNB for the debt-to-equity conversion, both parties could move on to other issues affecting the bank including the reduction of the bank's par value, which is now at P60 per share.

The government's 30.4-percent stake in PNB was diluted to 16 percent last September when Tan infused P10 billion into the bank.

Napocor seeks ₱3B in bridge financing

THE NATIONAL Power Corp. is seeking a P3-billion bridge financing from the Philippine National Bank to cover the shortfall in the power agency's operating and capital expenses, Napocor president Jesus N. Alcordo said Wednesday.

"We are seeking a one-year loan but we have not discussed the terms of the loan yet because it still needs the approval of PNB's executive committee," Alcordo said.

He said the cash-strapped power agency would need the funds by next month.

Early in the negotiations, Alcordo said the bank wanted the Department of Finance to guarantee the loan. However, he said Napocor instead offered PNB a "comfort letter" that would assure the bank that Napocor would be able to service the loan.

"Once loan is approved by the PNB executive committee, the negotiations for the terms would be easy," Alcordo added.

He explained that Napocor has decided to tap PNB because the agency's credit line with Land Bank of the Philippines was "almost depleted."

"This loan facility will not cover the servicing of Napocor's maturing loans," Alcordo said.

Earlier, a DoF official told reporters that Napocor would not get its $50-million share in the second tranche of a program loan from the Asian Development Bank worth $200 million because the national government would use the amount to cover the budget deficit. This left Napocor with no other option but to seek a bridge financing.

Napocor is also set to finalize within the quarter foreign borrowings of up to $400 million to complete its working capital requirement and to refinance past debts.

FOR 'TRANSCO AND GENCOS'

Napocor adopts strategy to lure more buyers

By Ronnel W. Domingo

ENERGY Secretary Vincent S. Perez yesterday said that putting the National Transmission Corp. on the auction block ahead of the generation companies and other assets of the National Power Corp. was a strategic move in view of the ongoing privatization efforts in Singapore and South Korea.

"They (Singapore and South Korea) are also privatizing generating assets next year. We don't want to do it at the same time," Perez told reporters.

He said the privatization of Napocor's assets, as mandated by the Electricity Industry Reform Act, would start with Transco by early 2002.

Perez said that whether Transco would be sold or offered for a concession would "depend on the decision of whoever will be the government's adviser for privatization."

He added that the government would choose tomorrow one or two advisers for this undertaking.

"We want to attract more buyers for the generation companies (or gencos) and this will be possible if they will be assured that a world-class operator will manage Transco," Perez said.

He said there was still no floor price for the company but Transco officer in charge Asisclo T. Gonzaga earlier said the government was aiming for at least $2.4 billion.

Gonzaga explained that the government would lose ownership of the firm's assets in an outright sale, but not in a concession agreement.

Perez also said that after Transco's privatization, Napocor would be selling the generating companies one after another.

The secretary downplayed the possibility of losing prospective buyers to Singapore and South Korea, saying the former was "a very small market" while the latter would be selling bigger blocks of assets that would require huge capital.

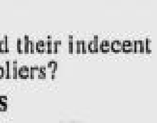
He said the Philippines had an advantage because the generating companies would be sold in smaller groups whereas South Korea would be selling at least 1 or 2 gigawatts of generating capacity per auction.

"Another advantage is that we are still growing by 7 percent or 8 percent a year in terms of power demand," Perez explained.

He also said that the country still has a large untapped market in the rural areas.

Addressing the other kinds of poverty

LABOR MANAGEMENT FORUM



Josephus B. Jimenez

WOW, that was a very dramatic Sona with Jason, Jomar and Erwin as props.

Yes, Madam President, your call to wage war against poverty is well understood by both the business and labor sectors. And yes, indications are that they will respond positively to your call. The only problem is that the government itself has yet to show an authentic leadership by example or a genuine effort to model the kind of behavior that you want the small guys to imbibe.

While you preach austerity, your top executives are receiving fantastic salaries and perks. They continue to go on junkets abroad with a coterie of "*alalays*," wasting much-needed dollars and appearing insensitive to the sufferings of the masses. While you preach integrity, corruption remains unabated in all echelons of the bureaucracy involving men in high places, their wives and mistresses.

Poverty of values

And so, the root cause of our economic poverty is not really lack of resources—human and natural—but the apparent absence of positive values among our leaders. Many politicians are preoccupied with their seemingly insatiable hunger for power, influence and money. Many do not have a sense of nationalism and selflessness. How can they command the respect and cooperation of the people?

While the workers are being asked to absorb the rising cost of living and the impact of the worsening unemployment rate, congressmen use government vehicles for personal needs and go around in irrelevant travels and conferences spending public funds.

Poverty of ethics

While you preach integrity in public service, some judges and prosecutors—who are vested with the sensitive functions to administer justice—are living beyond their means. Some spend hours in hotel lobbies talking to litigants and lawyers, others accept favors from big law firms while court personnel waste official hours doing personal business and even maintaining contacts with plaintiffs and defendants.

You ask the workers to sacrifice although they have been sacrificing all their lives. Department secretaries and bureau directors, for their part, spend government hours appearing on TV and holding press conferences instead of reaching out to their poor constituencies and just doing their jobs.

Poverty of leadership

You preach leadership based on principles, but your own Cabinet members do not seem to model the kind of leadership you want to propagate, some of them, anyway. You have a Cabinet member who still heads his own political party that is other than your own. When he goes to the region, he allegedly gathers his ward leaders and treats them to lunch. Are the expenses charged to the department when the function is that of his political party?

How then can we convince our workers not to ask for a P125-daily wage increase when your government officials ostentatiously display their luxurious cars, their fancy dinners in expensive hotels and resorts, their mistresses and lovers, and their indecent fellowship with contractors and suppliers?

Poverty of morals

We want to believe you when you pontificate on morality in the lives of men and women in government. But how can our workers accept your preaching if the senators and congressmen belonging to your own coalition openly announce their wheeling and dealing, their horse trading and their arm twisting, if only to fulfill their covetousness of the posts of Speaker and Senate President.

The lifestyles of your own partymates do not reflect the high moral ground that you preach in the pulpit of your office. Instead of rebuking them, you even anoint them as your own candidates in their intra-party maneuvering and posturing.

Poverty of concern

While you talk of glowing figures and dazzling statistics, the workers and their families are on starvation wages, their jobs are continuously under threat of globalization and privatization. The rising unemployment rate won't be abated by emergency works arranged by local politicians. The price of rice cannot be artificially controlled by the NFA rolling stores. PCSO's "*lugaw*" cannot alleviate the hunger of the masses.

All media hypes are band aid PR programs with no long-term effects. The rate of poverty will further deteriorate. The poor will even become poorer. Politicians will even become richer and government bureaucrats will try more to prop up the image of public officials and gain more "*pogi*" points. But the people know better.

Poverty of hopes

In the face of all the above kinds of poverty, how can the workers and the businessmen hope to attain a better socioeconomic condition for our people? Despite all our speeches, those glossy press releases and almost daily TV appearances, how can the workers stop marching in the streets? How can our professionals stop migrating to the US and the Middle East?

The workers will become more agitated, hungrier and angrier than ever. Hopelessness and helplessness can be the worst kind of poverty that can ever afflict the people.

Poverty of confidence

How can our people continue to trust a government that does not have the moral authority to lead. I remember Doy Laurel in his maiden privilege speech as senator in the '70s, when he talked of a crisis of confidence, which he said was the most damaging crisis that can beset a nation.

Today, this nation is facing that crisis again. The civil society has been betrayed. The workers have been stabbed at the back. Business has been misled. The people are numb. They are now unable to believe in anybody or trust on anything anymore. We are on the verge of despair, hovering between anger and disillusion. Only our faith in God remains to keep our people moving.

Yes, Madam, *labanan ang kahirapan at labanan din ang kapalaluan ng mga hunghang! Ang iba'y nasa paligid lang po ninyo.*

(For comments, you can reach the writer at the following e-mail address: josephus.jimenez@pcppi.com.ph.)

DISCLOSURES

THE CHANGE in the stock trading symbol of **Prime Gaming Philippines Inc.** from "PGMC" to "PGPI" will be reflected in the bourse's computer system today.

* * *

SUN Life Financial Services of Canada Inc. declared a C$0.12 per common share cash dividend in favor of stockholders of record as of Aug. 27 and shall be payable on Sept. 30.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Itogon Suyoc Mines Inc.** were Rafael Ortigas Jr., Alberto Montilla, Froilan Gervasio, Ignacio Ortigas, Celia de Jesus, Jose Ernesto Villaluna Jr., Luciano Tan, Mario Viel, Roberto Ongpin, Alex Villamar and Jaime Gonzalez.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **JG Summit Holdings Inc.** were John Gokongwei Jr., Johnson Robert Go Sr., James Go, Lance Gokongwei, Lily Ngochua, Patrick Henry Go, Ignacio Gotao, Wilfrido Tecson, Gabriel Singson, Ricardo Romulo and Cornelio Peralta. The company also declared a P0.02-per-share cash dividend in favor of stockholders as of Aug. 9. This is payable on Sept. 7.

* * *

MANILA Mining Corp. said it would temporarily lay off about two-thirds of its employees.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Boulevard Holdings Inc.** were Jose Marcel Panlilio, Lorenzo Tanada III, Nicole Morris, Alfredo Joaquin, Marlo Cristobal, Reynaldo Maulit, Francis Patron, Lilia Baun and Antero Jose Caganda

* * *

EFFECTIVE Oct. 1 this year, Joey Bermudez becomes **Chinatrust Philippines Commercial Bank's** president and director. William Go, the bank's current president, will then become vice chairman of the board. *Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research*

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Thursday, July 26, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	68	68	66.5	67	166,800
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	36	36	36	36	29,600
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	207	210	205	206	42,610
Philippine National Bank	41	41	40	40	9,000
Phil. Savings Bank	28	29	28	29	900
Security Bank Corp.	19.75	19.75	19.5	19.75	2,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	500
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.24	1.24	101,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1460	1485	1460	1480	4,710
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1315	1315	1310	1315	37,740
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	38.5	38.5	38	38	7,500
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.47	0.47	730,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	670	670	670	670	2,850
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.037	0.038	0.037	0.038	3,800,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.9	4	3.9	4	41,000
Piltel	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	10,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	10,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	670	670	665	665	49,580
Ivantage Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	50,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.033	0.034	0.033	0.034	35,900,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	37.5	37.5	37	37	12,600
Manila Electric Co. B	46.5	46.5	46.5	46.5	615,200
Petron Corp.	1.96	1.96	1.88	1.88	2,798,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	50,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.12	2.14	2.06	2.06	2,128,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	1,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	100,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	126,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.18	1.2	1.18	1.2	771,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	51,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.4	5.6	5.3	5.4	7,107,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.75	13.5	13.75	112,200
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	27	27	26.5	26.5	590,500
RFM Corp.	2.4	2.48	2.24	2.24	7,804,000
San Miguel Corp. A	42.5	43	42.5	42.5	139,000
San Miguel Corp. B	56.5	56.5	56	56	772,700
Universal Robina Corp.	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	1,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.7	0.71	0.7	0.71	300,000
Ayala Corp.	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.4	167,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	40,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	559,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	1.26	1.26	1.18	1.18	2,237,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	270,000
APC Group Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	400,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.009	0.0095	0.0085	0.0085	166,000,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	12	12	12	12	500
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	200,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.76	1.78	1.66	1.68	10,048,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	500,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	50,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	550,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	200,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.9	0.9	140,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	166,800
Global Equities Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.18	0.18	310,000
Ionics Inc.	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	4,400
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.02	2.02	2	2	253,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	900,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.68	0.69	1,470,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.45	370,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	100,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	25,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	210,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.24	0.32	0.24	0.3	11,510,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
A Brown Company Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	10,000
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	60,000
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	5,000
Music Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.7	1.7	60,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	180,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	100,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.86	0.87	0.86	0.87	60,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	56,300
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	3,430,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	380,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	50,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
Abs-Cbn Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	38.5	38.5	38.5	38.5	23,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp-Pref	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	1,000
Jollibee Warrants	13	13	13	13	320,700
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	15,000,000
PNB Warrants	12	12	12	12	200
RFM Corp.-Pref.	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	5,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.017	0.017	0.016	0.017	54,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.8	3,032,000
Cityland Development Corp.	3	3	3	3	3,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	550,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.24	0.245	0.24	0.245	750,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	150,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	20,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.04	2.04	1.94	1.96	1,540,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2	2	2	2	100,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	3,700,000
SM Development Corp.	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.84	10,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.5	2,787,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.006	0.006	31,000,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	5,000,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	12,000,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.38	2.38	2.38	2.38	2,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.0525	0.0525	0.048	0.048	27,600,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines B	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	200,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.175	0.175	0.17	0.17	1,000,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.175	0.18	0.175	0.175	1,900,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.005	0.005	0.0044	0.0044	277,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0046	0.0046	326,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	11,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	17,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	450,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.46	0.48	0.46	0.47	1,650,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	200,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	2,100,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	27,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0048	0.0048	0.0046	0.0046	50,000,000
Pacifica	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	21,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.2	0.2	0.19	0.19	40,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	395,360	78,118,315.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	334,607,330	246,686,215.00
PRO	12,642,000	36,457,070.00
Mining	712,002,000	6,477,710.00
OIL	100,140,000	746,200.00
GRAND TOTALS:	1,159,811,690	368,589,760.00

	AVERAGES	
Banks & Fin Svc	548.36	DOWN 2.43
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,943.03	DOWN 5.18
PRO	513.40	UP 0.48
Mining	1,330.02	DOWN 90.76
OIL	1.74	DOWN 0.05
All Shares Index	804.99	UP 6.89
Composite	1,362.58	DOWN 3.43

NO. OF ADVANCES: 22; NO. OF DECLINES: 51; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 44; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 117; NO. OF TRADES: 2,633

CURRENCIES

July 26, 2001 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.135716	1.000000	53.5870
Japan	Yen	0.009189	0.008091	0.4336
United Kingdom	Pound	1.622147	1.428300	76.5383
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.145613	0.128212	6.8705
Switzerland	Franc	0.662613	0.583431	31.2643
Canada	Dollar	0.739352	0.650999	34.8851
Singapore	Dollar	0.625327	0.550600	29.5050
Australia	Dollar	0.576390	0.507511	27.1960
Bahrain	Dinar	3.012676	2.652661	142.1481
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.302859	0.266667	14.2899
Brunei	Dollar	0.623165	0.548697	29.4030
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000114	0.000100	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.024852	0.021882	1.1726
UAE	Dirham	0.309291	0.272331	14.5934
Korea	Won	0.000873	0.000769	0.0412
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.880500	47.1834
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.450193	24.1245
France	Franc	0.152450	0.134231	7.1930
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.399553	21.4108
Austria	Schilling	0.072672	0.063988	3.4289
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.021827	1.1696
Italy	Lire	0.000517	0.000455	0.0244
Finland	Markka	0.168187	0.148089	7.9356
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004392	0.2354
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005292	0.2836
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.021827	1.1696
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.118004	59.9105

Aviation execs say open skies not feasible

By Abigail L. Ho

KEY aviation officials said Tuesday the country was not yet ready for an open-skies policy.

"We're trying to earn more dollars. If we open our skies completely to foreign entities, we stand to lose whatever we would earn," Air Transportation Office chief Adelberto Yap told the INQUIRER.

"It is not feasible at this point in time. It actually depends on how the economy will recover," Ninoy Aquino International Airport general manager Edgardo Manda said.

Yap and Manda said they preferred a "progressive liberalization" of the local air transport industry instead of an open-skies policy.

An open-skies policy will give other countries unrestricted aviation access. It also dismantles government control over pricing and route designations.

The government said earlier it would oppose a proposal to allow unrestricted aviation access into Philippine and US markets.

US charge d'affaires Michael Malinowski had written a letter to Manila informing it that a US team will arrive here to discuss an open-skies policy with local aviation officials.

"The purpose of the visit would be to discuss both bilateral and multilateral options for establishing an open skies relationship between our two countries, and to answer any questions that Philippine authorities may have about open skies," Malinowski had said in his letter to the transportation department.

The proposal would remove restrictions on routes, capacities, flight frequencies and fare pricing.

But such an arrangement "will spell the death of our airlines," a Philippine foreign office official, who did not want to be named, said.

"They will gobble up our airlines," the official said. "We cannot agree at this point to grant them open skies."

"The open skies agreement has a far reaching agenda," ATO's Yap said. "Compared with foreign airlines, we are on the losing end because they have better aircraft and equipment."

He added that an open-skies policy would allow other countries' airlines to steal passengers because they would be free to choose their routes.

"(The foreign airlines) could eventually gobble up smaller airlines," he said.

"Local airlines will most likely not be able to supply all the flights to their counterparts' country. The other party, however, would take advantage of the number of flights that the country has allowed it to have here," he said.

He said even the country's pioneer flag carrier, Philippine Airlines Inc., would have a hard time keeping up with its foreign counterparts.

Asian Hospital raises capital

ASIAN Hospital has increased its capital to P2 billion with Vista Medical Management, its major shareholder and hospital operator, committing to raise its equity in the company by $2.2 million.

Two other major shareholders—Insular Life and Health Delivery System Inc.—likewise pledged additional equity of P43 million and P30.5 million, respectively. The balance is held by doctors and new strategic investors.

The financial community through a number of noted financial institutions have signified its confidence and support for the project. The construction of the hospital and the purchase of equipment, now over 85 percent complete, have obtained a financing amounting to P1.3 billion from a syndicate of local banks consisting of Land Bank of the Philippines, Planters Development Bank, Chinatrust Bank, Bank of Commerce, Asia Trust and Manila Bank. The loans were from the Japan Export Import Facility (Jexim) and the Social Security System, through its Hospital Financing Program.

Another P200 million will be funded by the SSS, under the same program, through the Philippine Bank of Communications. Likewise, a credit facility for $7 million has been approved by the International Finance Corp.

The shareholders of Vista Management, including JP Morgan Partners (BHCA), LP and Premier Health Holding Pte Ltd., have decided to increase their investments in the Philippine operations because of the bright prospects of the healthcare sector in the Philippines.

Aside from Asian Hospital, Vista Management owns Healthway Medical Clinics, which recently acquired Ayala Healthcare Clinics from Ayala Corp. Healthcare Medical Clinics is the largest chain of ambulatory centers in Metro Manila with nine operating service points located in shopping malls and other strategic areas.

Stocks

(From page B1)

Volume rose to 1.16 billion shares while value fell to P367.23 million from 715 million shares worth P472 million Wednesday.

"The market is drifting lower since fundamentals aren't supporting it, what with second quarter corporate earnings not expected to spring any pleasant surprises and the peso still weak," said AB Capital Securities analyst Jose Vistan.

Vistan said the country's economic prospects appear bleak given the lack of interest by the private sector to step up investments in the country.

"We need the private sector to start investing again," he said. "The government is doing its part by putting in place policies, pump-priming the economy." *AP*

ALAMIN AT UNAWAIN!

30¢

Bumaba na ng 30 sentimos per kilowatt-hour ang kuryente mula sa Napocor.

SIMULA PA LAMANG ITO

Ang mandated rate reduction o pagbaba ng 30 sentimos per kilowatt-hour sa singil sa kuryente para sa mga residential consumers ay isang probisyon ng bagong batas na tinatawag na Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EIRA).

Ang diskwentong ito ay para lamang sa kuryenteng ipinagbibili ng Napocor. Ang eksaktong adjustment ay proportionate sa dami ng kuryente na binibili ng isang electric cooperative o power distributor mula sa Napocor.

Millions of Filipino households will benefit from this because Napocor supplies roughly 87 percent of the country's total electricity demand. Residential consumers account for 33 percent of the total consumption.

Kung ikaw ay kumukunsumo ng 200 kilowatt-hours kada buwan para sa ilaw, ref, TV at electric fan, mga P60 din ang matitipid mo buwan-buwan o mahigit P700 sa isang taon.

The rate reduction took effect immediately upon enactment of EIRA and will be reflected in your electricity bills this August at the earliest.

Simula pa lamang ito sa maraming benepisyo ng EIRA.

ANO BA TALAGA ANG EIRA?

Ang EIRA ay reporma sa industriyang kuryente.

Like the reforms introduced in the telecommunications industry, the EIRA will dismantle Napocor's monopoly by privatizing it into several generating companies which will then be sold to private investors.

Dahil dito hindi na mangungutang ang gobyerno para suportahan ang naluluging Napocor.

MAGKAKAROON NG KOMPETISYON

Dahil magiging pribado na ang Napocor, magkakaroon ng kompetisyon sa generation sector ng kuryente.

Hindi lang yan. Pati ang supply side ng industriya ay magkakaroon din ng kompetisyon.

Pag may kompetisyon, malaki ang posibilidad na bumaba ang presyo ng kuryente, gaya ng nangyayari sa industriyang telepono na ngayon ay nagkakaroon ng price war o bakbakan sa diskwento sa IDD at NDD rates.

Ito ang naging karanasan ng mga bansang nag-reporma ng kanilang industriyang kuryente. Gaya ng Australia (36% rate reduction), New Zealand (14%), Argentina (44%) at United Kingdom (25%).

Pagbaba ng presyo ng kuryente, bababa din ang halaga ng mga pangunahing bilihin.

REFORM TAKES TIME

Ang EIRA ay hindi instant relief.

Mahabang proseso ang reporma sa kuryente dahil babaguhin ang structure ng mismong industriya. Umabot ng halos pitong taon ang pagrereporma sa telecommunications industry ngunit ngayon pa lamang natin nararamdaman ang mga benepisyo nito. Sa pagpapatupad ng mga repormang nakapaloob sa EIRA, mararamdaman natin ang iba't ibang benepisyo nito pag nagkakaroon na ng tunay na kompetisyon.

Reform takes time.

To prepare for the implementation of the EIRA, the Department of Energy will hold a series of public consultations on its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

Makakatulong ka dito.

Ang Electric Power Industry Reform Act ay mahalaga sa buhay at kinabukasan mo. Alamin at unawain.

Department of Energy
Working for tomorrow's energy needs today.

Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Tel. Nos.: (632)840-1401 to 21 local 227 or 322
Website: www.doe.gov.ph/power
e-mail: irr@doe.gov.ph

EFFECTIVE SEPT. 1

Opec to cut output to support falling prices

VIENNA—Opec said Wednesday it would cut production by 1 million barrels per day to support falling prices in an acknowledgement that a global economic slowdown had squeezed its profits.

Opec said in a statement from Algiers that the cut—which would take effect Sept. 1—was intended to "assure market stability, satisfy global demand and avoid price volatility in the interest of producers and consumers."

Algerian Energy Minister and current Opec president Chakib Khelil said Opec had considered "the impact of weak global economic growth and a drop in demand due to high oil stocks."

Oil prices rose as the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries announced its decision, but they were capped because the market had anticipated the action.

Dealers remained skeptical that it would be enough to compensate for fast-contracting demand.

The price of a barrel of Brent North Sea crude for September delivery stood at $25.22 in late afternoon trading, up 32 cents on the day but lower than a morning high of $25.30 dollars.

In New York, the light sweet crude August contract rose 26 cents in early trading to $26.57 a barrel.

"Opec has decided to reduce its production by 1 million bpd from Sept. 1 (and will keep) options open to hold an extraordinary meeting if the market requires it," Khelil told the official Algerian news agency APS.

The 11-nation cartel nodded through the cut without the standard Vienna meeting at which new quotas were usually thrashed out.

Analysts said the Opec action could work in the long run, but in the short run, current overproduction and the return of Iraqi crude to world markets after a five-week break would limit the effect of the cutback.

"A lot depends on compliance," said Lawrence Eagles, an analyst with the GNI brokerage in London. "I would think that actual production would be cut by somewhere between 500,000 and 700,000 barrels a day" because of "relatively poor compliance," he told AFP.

Opec is looking to cut output because of fears that a supply glut could saturate markets, particularly as demand is slowing because of the current global economic downturn.

"The market was expecting a cut of 1 million to 1.5 million barrels a day so it is at the lower end of market expectations," Credit Lyonnais Rouse broker Steve Raker said.

"The market has not moved at all on the back of the cut. It was already priced into the market. Normally you would expect some sort of reaction once it's been confirmed," he added.

"It should help the situation (of market oversupply) but whether it will totally resolve the situation remains to be seen," he said. *AFP*

Former treasury chief supports strong dollar

WASHINGTON—Former Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin on Wednesday urged the White House to continue its strong US dollar policy, but other Wall Street heavy hitters told a Senate panel it was time to abandon the rhetoric.

"Modifying our strong dollar policy could adversely affect inflation, interest rates and capital inflow and would lessen the favorability of our terms of exchange with the rest of the world," Rubin told members of a Senate banking subcommittee at a hearing on the current account deficit.

As treasury secretary under President Bill Clinton, Rubin repeatedly asserted a strong dollar was in the best interest of the US economy, a stance that his successor, Larry Summers, and the current secretary, Paul O'Neill, stuck to.

But two prominent Wall Street economists said the rhetoric, which some said was artificially propping up the dollar despite a massive slowdown in the US economy, should be dropped to allow the market to fully determine the dollar's value.

"Now that the boom is over, the rationale for a 'strong dollar' has lessened, especially as the dollar's strength is undermining the effectiveness of US monetary policy and undercutting US international trade competitiveness," Goldman Sachs chief economist Bill Dudley told the committee. *Reuters*

As Argentina stumbles, US urges quick review

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina—A senior US Treasury official on Wednesday urged the International Monetary Fund to quickly review Argentina's loan program to free up fresh funds to help its financing needs after the Argentine government suffered a political setback in its efforts to avert a debt default.

John Taylor, US Treasury undersecretary for international affairs, said Argentina had "overperformed" in meeting fiscal targets for the second quarter as set out by the IMF, and the Argentine government's plan to cut deficit spending to zero went beyond what was called for in the IMF program.

"It makes sense for the IMF board to move quickly on completing its review of the second quarter and thereby enabling funds to be disbursed," Taylor said in a statement after meeting Argentine Finance Secretary Daniel Marx.

Taylor's comments helped the Buenos Aires benchmark MerVal stock index to reverse early losses after news that opposition Peronists, who controlled the Senate, said late Tuesday they wanted to delay by about a week a debate on spending cuts the government hopes would erase an estimated $1.5-billion budget gap in the second half.

In Washington, Taylor praised the "zero-deficit" plan and said it should help put Argentina on a sustainable fiscal path and bolster confidence, presumably on the country's capacity to service its $128-billion debt.

The United States is the IMF's largest shareholder.

Growing deficit spending, which doubled the public debt in just a few years, had given investors pause and led economists to question whether Argentina could make debt payments with the country in a three-year economic rut and no recovery in sight. *Reuters*

MCDO GOES PUBLIC

McDonald's Co. Japan president Den Fujita smiles as he bites a hamburger to celebrate his company stocks' listing on the Jasdaq exchange, a first initial public offering for McDonald's outside the United States. McDonald's stocks received a warm reception as they began trading on the market earlier in the day, opening at 4,700 yen ($38), 400 yen ($3.24) above its premarket price.

Economic gloom stalks euro zone

FRANKFURT—Slumping business confidence and mounting corporate job losses have banished hopes of a swift rebound in the euro zone economy.

Economists argue the risk of recession is still moderate, adding some important warning signals—a collapse in household spending and a sharper slide in long-term than short-term borrowing costs—are not yet visible.

A pick-up in French household confidence last month sounded a hopeful note that the euro zone consumer was holding up well.

But industry is getting hammered and its efforts to restructure have put thousands of jobs on the line, threatening unemployment that will prolong the slowdown.

"There has been a major period of over-investment by companies. You are not talking about a couple of quarters for this to correct, it could take several years," said Patrick Artus of European Central Bank watcher EMU Monitor.

US and European financial leaders are sticking to the message that growth will bounce next year and pin their hopes on consumption taking the lead in a euro zone recovery.

High euro zone inflation this year, particularly in Germany, sapped real spending power, blunting the benefits of euro zone tax cuts in January. But prices had since started to head down.

Lower inflation should boost growth and help businesses to recover as consumers, whose demand makes up 57 percent of euro zone gross domestic product, respond to lower prices by buying more goods and services.

Unfortunately, the corporate reporting season has brought a flurry of daily bad news from large corporations admitting the slowdown is worse than imagined, spelling doom for tens of thousands of jobs as firms wrestle down their costs.

European Commission surveys already reveal growing anxiety over employment security and with jobs carnage dominating the news—over 30,000 were axed by European and US companies on Tuesday alone—the threat to consumer confidence is high and rising. *Reuters*

Retail slide underscores Japan slump

TOKYO—Japan's retail sales slid for a third straight month in June, the government said Thursday, underscoring the sluggishness of the economy and giving another headache to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi before a Sunday election.

Nationwide retail sales fell 2.7 percent in June from a year earlier, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry said, providing yet another reminder that consumers remained stubbornly tight-fisted as their economy flirted with a recession.

Sales at larger stores, which were more sensitive to changes in consumer spending, declined 1.9 percent in June from a year earlier, excluding new-store openings and closures, marking the 38th straight month of decline.

"This really clearly indicates that the negative situation in the personal consumption area is really very much widespread and becoming even more widespread," Noriko Hama, an economist at Mitsubishi Research Institute, told Reuters Television.

"So, yes, I think the reality is really starting to seep through into the household sector, and I think we are going to see more of this further down the road," she added. *Reuters*

Australia seen shaking off global flu

SYDNEY—Australia's economy is healthy enough to withstand the current global slowdown in much the same way as it shrugged off the deep Asian crisis with growth. At least, that's the fervent hope of Treasurer Peter Costello. And analysts say his hopes may not be misplaced.

Exports, which make up around one-fifth of the economy, have held up despite the downturn across Australia's trading partners, aided by the cheap Australian dollar.

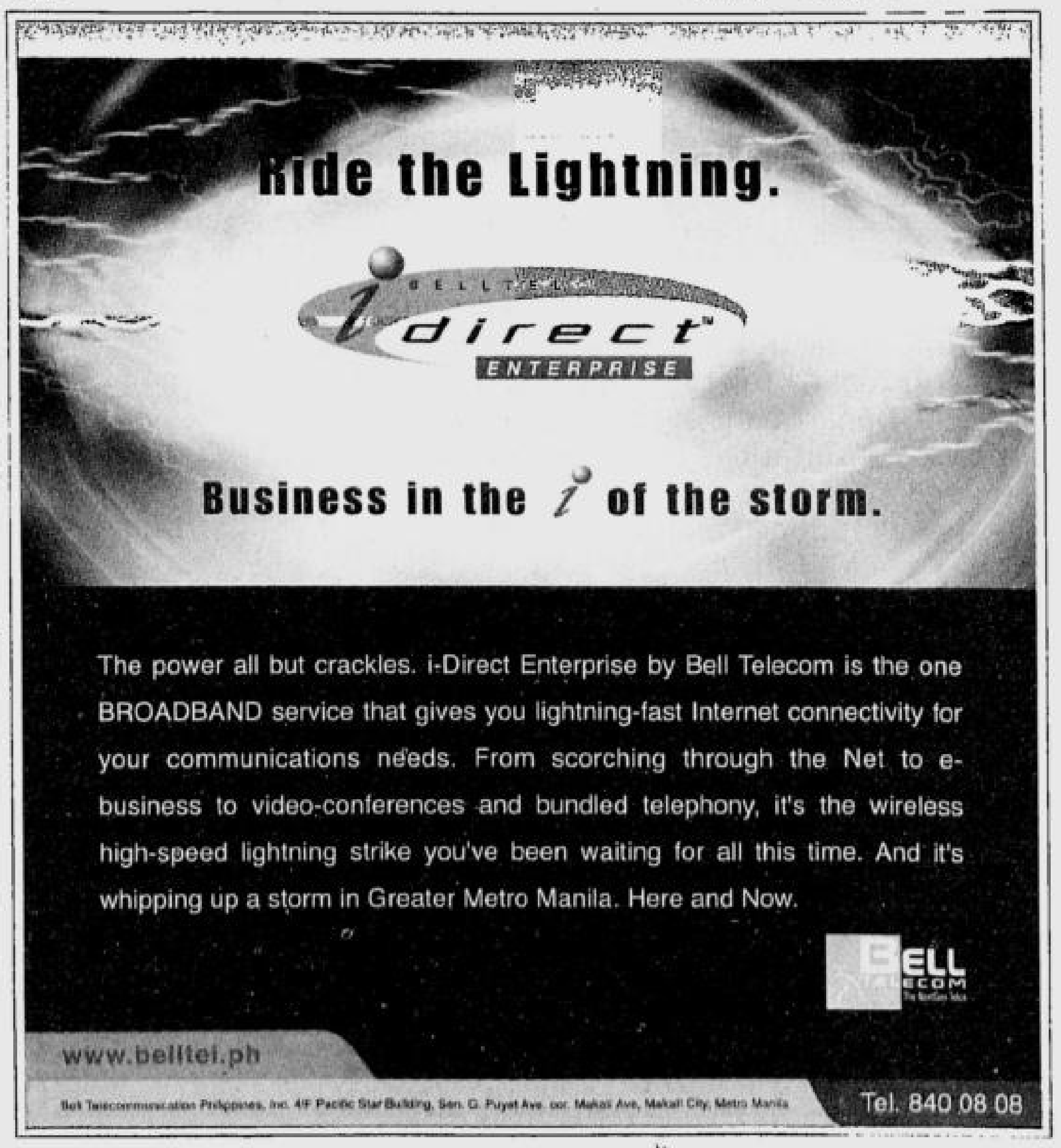
Annualized export growth over the first five months of the year was running at nine percent. And no one is expecting much appreciation in the grounded Aussie, now hovering at around 51 US cents per dollar.

On the domestic front, demand is bouncing back strongly as housing emerges from its tax-induced slump and business and consumer confidence are rising steadily from their lows.

Addressing a Sydney function on the benefits of globalization on Wednesday night, Costello acknowledged that US growth had slowed to near flat, Japan was probably in recession and there were "worrying signs" in Asia.

But he said Australia was healthy enough to withstand the malaise.

"The world is sneezing, but we have had a triple immunization," he said, citing the budget surplus, low interest rates and super-competitive exports. *Reuters*



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Thai c. bank reaffirms currency float

BANGKOK—Bank of Thailand Governor Pridiyathorn Devakula said Wednesday the central bank remained committed to allowing the baht to move with market forces but would act to prevent too much volatility.

Pridiyathorn said the central bank would keep a close eye on the unit's short-term movements but allow the troubled currency longer-term mobility.

"We are only in to counter the irregular transactions. It is a managed float, not a clear float," he said in a speech before the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand.

"We should not allow certain small, irregular transactions to affect the market, as we know this market is very, very thin," he said.

The central bank chief said Thailand's foreign reserves were currently "rich," standing at around six times the country's monthly imports.

He said the BOT had no specific target for foreign reserves but would keep them at a healthy level.

Foreign reserves were $31.5 billion as of July 13, according to BOT data.

The International Monetary Fund, which sponsored a $17.2-billion bailout package for Thailand during the Asian crisis of 1997-98, recommended minimum foreign reserves of $32 billion to $34 billion.

The baht fell to a 40-month low of 45.87 to the dollar earlier this week, its lowest since mid-March 1998, from around 43 at the beginning of the year.

Pridiyathorn said the baht was moving in line with other currencies in the region.

But the BOT chief said the Thai currency did not generally "mirror" movements in the Indonesian rupiah or the Philippine peso, both of which had been highly volatile this year.

The governor did not say what an appropriate level of the baht should be.

"The proper rate of the baht should be easy for traders and exporters to do business," he said. "But, at the same time, it should not be too strong to invite speculators to attack."

He said he expected the amount of foreign debt repaid this year by the Thai private sector would come down to $5 billion to $6 billion from around $10 billion last year. *Reuters*

IMF sets mission to Indonesia in Sept.

WASHINGTON—The International Monetary Fund on Wednesday expressed the possibility of a mission to Indonesia in September following a draft letter of intent issued Friday containing Jakarta's reform pledges in return for a $400 million aid tranche.

"The change in government itself need not cause a mission to go there," IMF spokesman Thomas Dawson stressed. "The developments in Indonesia in the last week were sort of part of that baseline scenario, but the mission had been in touch with the then-vice president and actually had a meeting with her."

Megawati Sukarnoputri, the former vice president, was installed as president of Indonesia Monday following the impeachment of Abdurrahman Wahid.

Though she sacked Wahid's entire Cabinet as the first order of business, she ordered the ministers to keep on working but not to make any major decisions without her approval until the new cabinet is formed.

The draft letter agreed to on Friday must first be approved and signed by the IMF board before it would allow the release of the stalled loan tranche.

The loan has been held up by the IMF since December because of Jakarta's alleged foot-dragging on economic reforms.

IMF executives have said the letter focused on maintaining macroeconomic stability and fiscal sustainability.

The IMF is coordinating a $5-billion aid package promised to Indonesia after its financial crisis starting in 1997.

"We have the ad referendum letter of intent. It is being reviewed by staff and management. We would expect that the new authorities there would be looking at it as well," Dawson said. *AFP*

Rising layoffs seen breaching US confidence

NEW YORK—If, as Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan says, the fabric of American consumer confidence has not yet been breached, it is wearing pretty thin under the strain of fast-mounting layoffs.

Economists who closely watch consumer indebtedness said this week they were growing increasingly concerned about the ability of heavily leveraged Americans to keep paying off their debts with job losses rising so rapidly.

"You can't be complacent about consumer confidence. It is currently endangered by an unfinished litany of corporate downsizing," said John Lonski, chief economist at credit rating agency Moody's Investors Service.

"As long as we have announced layoffs and slumping stock prices, then we have every reason to believe that unemployment might continue to rise, layoffs will rise and eventually will take a toll on consumer spending," he said.

The US economy has barely grown for the past year, and unemployment has risen to 4.5 percent from 3.9 percent last October as withering corporate profits have spurred the most layoffs seen since a decade ago, during the last US recession.

Average profits at S&P 500 companies are expected to have dropped by more than 17 percent in the April-June quarter, which would be the worst performance since the 1990-1991 recession. The current quarter does not look much brighter, which bodes for more deep job cuts, economists say.

Despite the rising layoffs and deepening corporate gloom, Greenspan said on Tuesday that Americans' faith in their economic well being had not yet cracked.

"The fabric of consumer confidence has not been breached," he told lawmakers in testimony on the state of the economy.

Greenspan probably based his conclusion on consumer spending—one of the most important economic indicators because it accounts for two-thirds of gross domestic product.

Reuters

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NEC to cut local, overseas chip output

TOKYO—Japanese computer giant NEC Corp. would cut semiconductor production at its domestic and overseas plants to cope with a prolonged slump in the global chip market, a report said Thursday.

NEC expects its group net profit in the six months to September to fall to zero from 15 billion yen ($122 million) forecast earlier, according to the Nihon Keizai Shimbun newspaper.

The company will halve output at its Scottish plant and suspend production of dynamic random access memory chips there, adding it also plans to halve the workforce of 1,600 at the plant.

The Scottish plant accounts for 20 percent of NEC's total DRAM output.

In Japan, NEC plans to consolidate its eight chip plants under regional firms so that it can transfer workers more easily and three of the plants may halt production.

NEC declined to confirm the Nihon Keizai report.

"We are considering implementing measures including cutting personnel costs amid a slump in the semiconductor market," a company spokesperson said.

"But we cannot say anything concrete at this moment," the spokesperson said, adding the company would announce earnings for the three months to June on Friday.

Toshiba Corp. announced last Thursday it would cut semiconductor investment by 28.6 percent for the year to March 2002 to 100 billion yen, down sharply from 140 billion yen initially set aside.

Fujitsu Ltd., Japan's largest computer maker, said last Tuesday it would slash microchip production at a US-based plant and reconsider investment plans for the year to March.

AFP

UOB dispatches takeover offer to OUB owners

SINGAPORE—United Overseas Bank fired another round Thursday in Singapore's banking shakeup, sending official takeover documents to shareholders of Overseas Union Bank.

UOB chair Wee Cho Yaw, who is locked in a battle with DBS Group for control of OUB, said his cash-and-share offer was a "superior value proposition" that would position the two family-controlled banks as the "pre-eminent bank in the Asia-Pacific region."

OUB shareholders have until Aug. 17 to decide on the bid from UOB. The rival offer from DBS closes Aug. 10.

UOB's S$10-billion ($5.5-billion) offer topped the earlier S$9.4-billion bid from DBS, which had so far refused to indicate if it would lift its bid.

UOB's offer comprises $4.02 in cash plus 0.52 UOB shares for each OUB share. It has already secured the backing of OUB founder Lien Ying Chow, who has a 26.5-percent shareholding in Singapore's fourth largest bank.

"Our existing strategy is to become a regional financial powerhouse, reshaping and repositioning ourselves to enhance shareholder value through rationalization, consolidation and restructuring," Wee said in the offer documents.

"We expect the union of UOB and OUB to accelerate realization of this strategy."

Last month, the government announced the second phase of its banking reform programs, which would open the sector further to foreign competition.

The Monetary Authority of Singapore, the de facto central bank, said there was only room for two local banks in the tiny domestic market of 4 million.

All five local banks are now either seeking to buy their rivals or are the target of acquisitions.

While DBS and UOB are bidding to buy OUB, Oversea-Chinese Banking Corp. has revised upwards its all-cash offer to $5.21 billion from $4.8 billion for Keppel Capital Holdings, which operates Keppel TatLee Bank, the smallest Singapore banking group.

AFP

Compaq posts $279-M loss

HOUSTON, Texas—World's No. 2 PC maker Compaq said Wednesday that it lost $279 million in the second quarter compared with a profit of $388 million in the same period a year ago.

The company's operating profit, excluding special charges, amounted to $67 million, or four cents a share, in line with First Call estimates.

Revenues declined 16.5 percent from the same period a year ago to $10.135 billion.

The company's operational results exclude a restructuring charge of $493 million.

"I am pleased with the company'' solid execution in this challenging environment," said Michael Capellas, Compaq chair and chief executive.

"We delivered on our commitments to improve the company's business model and built momentum behind our services and solutions-led strategy."

Capellas offered a guarded outlook for Compaq, saying, "As you have heard from others in the industry, this economic environment continues to be challenging, coupled with the fact that, for Compaq, this quarter represents a tough year over year comparison."

"We've seen some stabilization in the US, with the exception of the consumer retail segment, but the market has weakened in Europe and other geographies," Capellas said. "In the short term, the market remains volatile and thus difficult to predict with much certainty."

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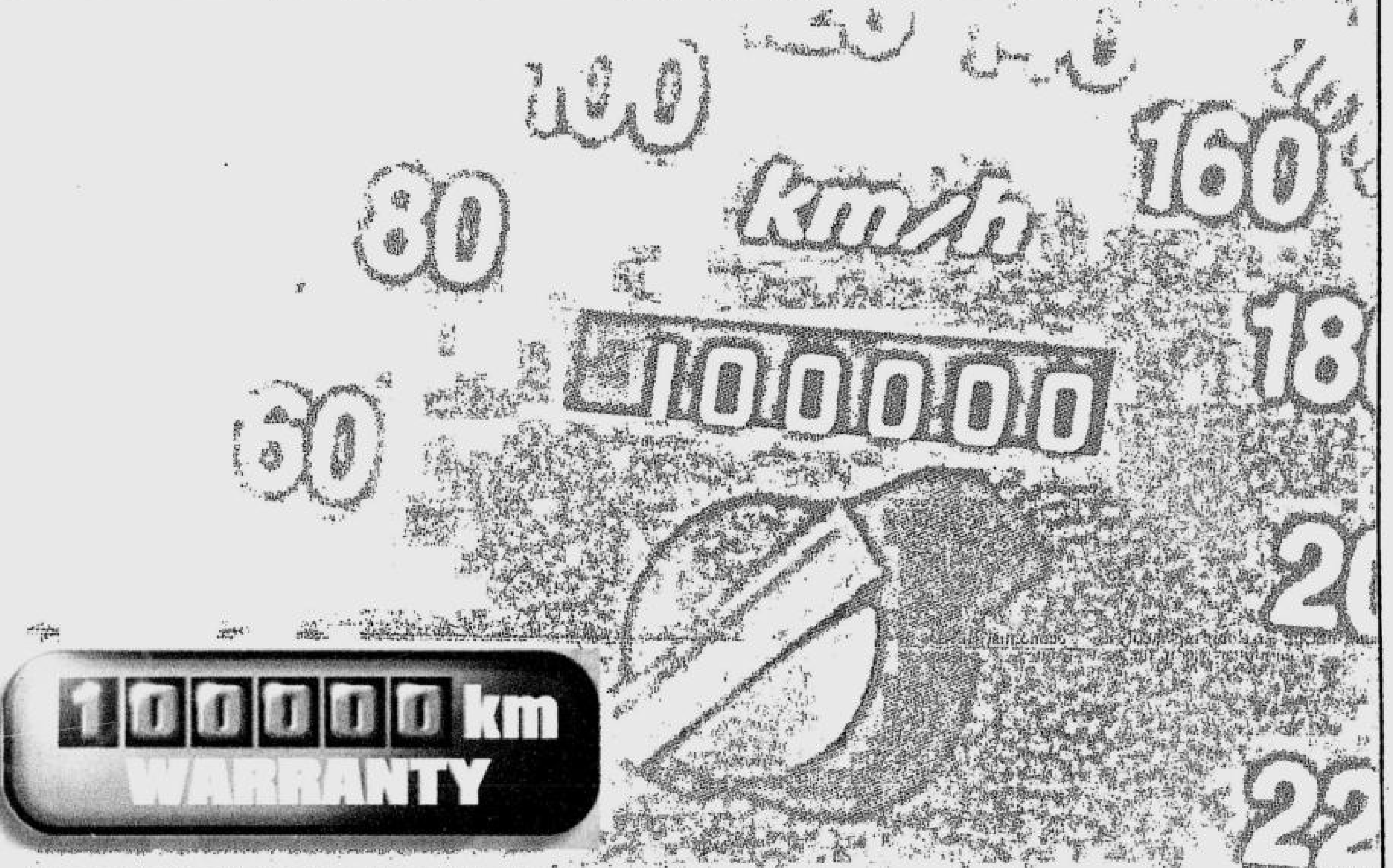

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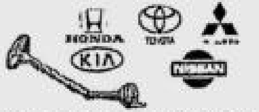

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given of the extrajudicial settlement of the estate of **MARIANO SALOMON, ANTONINA SALOMON** and **GERONIMA SALOMON** executed by theirs on May 25, 2001 acknowledge before Atty. Sofronio Untalan, Notary Public in and for the City of Makati entered in his Notarial Register as Doc. #399; Page #80; Book #XV, Series of 2001
PDI -- July 13, 20 & 27, 2001

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ROMEO A. HERRERA who died March 26, 1999, located in Puerto Princesa, Roxas and Coron Palawan has been extrajudicially settled by the heirs, per Doc# 351, Page# 71, Book# IX, Series of 2000 before Dionisio T. Flora, Notary Public of Paranaque City. (PDI-July 18, 25, & Aug. 1, 2001)

PUBLIC NOTICES

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT
Holy Spirit, Thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your perpetual glory. Amen
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Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

PRESENT:

AUTHORITY OF THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS TO APPOINT, FILL POSITIONS AND TRANSFER OR REASSIGN ITS PERSONNEL DURING THE PROHIBITED PERIODS IN CONNECTION WITH THE PLEBISCITE TO RATIFY THE AMENDMENTS TO THE ORGANIC ACT IN THE AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO ON AUGUST 14, 2001.
x------------------------------------x

BENIPAYO, Alfredo L.,	Chairman
TANCANGCO, Luzviminda G.,	Commissioner
JAVIER, Rufino S.B.,	Commissioner
LANTION, Ralph C.,	Commissioner
SADAIN, Mehol K.,	Commissioner
BORRA, Resurreccion Z.,	Commissioner
TUASON, Florentino, Jr. A.,	Commissioner

Promulgated: 20 July 2001

RESOLUTION NO. 4515

WHEREAS, Sec. 56 and Sec. 261, paragraphs (g) and (h), of the Omnibus Election Code provide as follows:

x x x

> "SEC. 56. Changes in the composition, distribution or assignment of field offices — The Commission may make changes in the composition, distribution and assignment of field offices, as well as its personnel, whenever the exigencies of the service and the interest of free, elderly, and honest election so require: Provided, That such changes shall be effective and enforceable only for the duration of the election period concerned and shall not affect the tenure of office of the incumbents of positions affected and shall not constitute a demotion, either in rank or salary, nor result in change of status: and Provided, further, That there shall be no changes in the composition, distribution or assignment within thirty (30) days before election, except for cause and after due notice and hearing, and that in no case shall a regional or assistant regional director be assigned to a region; a provincial election supervisor to a province; or a city or municipal election registrar to a city or municipality, where he and his spouse are related to any candidate within the fourth civil degree of consanguinity or affinity as the case may be."
>
> x x x
>
> SEC. 261. Prohibited Acts — The following shall be guilty of an election offense:
>
> x x x x x x x x x
>
> (g) *Appointment of new employees, creation of new position, promotion, or giving salary increases* — During the period of forty five (45) days before regular election and thirty days before a special election, (1) any head, official or appointing officer of a government office, agency or instrumentality, whether national or local, including government-owned or controlled corporations, who appoints or hires any new employee, whether provisional, temporary or casual, or creates and fills any new positions, except upon prior authority of the Commission. The Commission shall not grant the authority sought unless, it is satisfied that the position to be filled is essential to the proper functioning of the office or agency concerned, and that the position shall not be filled in a manner that may influence the election. (underlining supplied)
>
> As an exception to the foregoing provisions, a new employee may be appointed in case of urgent need: Provided , however, That notice of the appointment shall be given to the Commission within three days from the date of the appointment. Any appointment or hiring in violation of this provision shall be null and void.
>
> x x x x x x x x x
>
> (h) *Transfer of officers and employees in the civil service* — Any public official who makes or causes any transfer or detail whatever of any officer or employee in the civil service including public school teachers, within the election period except upon approval of the Commission."

WHEREAS, the aforequoted provisions are applicable to the plebiscite to ratify the amendments to the Organic Act of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (RA 9054) on August 14, 2001;

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to appoint, transfer or reassign personnel of the Commission on Elections during the prohibited period in order that it can carry out its constitutional duty to conduct free, orderly, honest, peaceful and credible elections.

NOW THEREFORE, the Commission on Elections by the virtue of the powers conferred upon it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code and other election laws, as an exception to the foregoing prohibitions, has RESOLVED, as it hereby RESOLVES, to appoint, hire new employees or fill new positions and transfer or reassign its personnel in the plebiscite areas, when necessary in the effective performance of its mandated functions during the prohibited period, provided that the changes in the assignment of its field personnel within the thirty (30) day period before plebiscite day shall be effected after due notice and hearing.

This resolution shall take effect on the seventh day after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Let copies hereof be-furnished the Civil Service Commission (CSC) for its information and guidance.

ALFREDO L. BENIPAYO
Chairman

LUZVIMINDA G. TANCANGCO
Commissioner

RUFINO S.B. JAVIER
Commissioner

RALPH C. LANTION
Commissioner

MEHOL K. SADAIN
Commissioner

RESURRECCION Z. BORRA
Commissioner

FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.
Commissioner

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

PRESENT:

IN THE MATTER OF THE RIGHT OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES INCLUDING THOSE IN GOVERNMENT OWNED AND CONTROLLED CORPORATIONS WITH ORIGINAL CHARTERS TO PUBLICLY EXPRESS THEIR OPINION ON THE ISSUES RELATED TO THE RATIFICATION OF THE AMENDMENTS TO THE ORGANIC ACT FOR THE AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO.
x------------------------------------x

BENIPAYO, Alfredo L.,	Chairman
TANCANGCO, Luzviminda G.,	Commissioner
JAVIER, Rufino S.B.,	Commissioner
LANTION, Ralph C.,	Commissioner
SADAIN, Mehol K.,	Commissioner
BORRA, Resurreccion Z.,	Commissioner
TUASON, Florentino, Jr. A.,	Commissioner

Promulgated: 20 July 2001

RESOLUTION NO. 4516

WHEREAS, the plebiscite to ratify the Amendments to the Organic Act for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (R.A. No. 9054) has been set on August 14, 2001, and the campaign period for the Plebiscite has been fixed from June 30 to August 12, 2001.

WHEREAS, due to the far-reaching importance of the plebiscite to the people in the plebiscite areas in particular to the entire nation in general, it is, just, fitting and proper that all the people in the areas where the plebiscite shall be held, to wit: The Provinces of Basilan, Cotabato, Davao del Sur, Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Palawan, South Cotabato, Saranggani, Sultan Kudarat, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, and Zamboanga Sibugay and the cities of Cotabato, Dapitan, Dipolog, General Santos, Iligan, Kidapawan, Marawi, Pagadian, Puerto Princesa, Digos, Koronadal, Tacrong, Zamboanga and Isabela, shall be given the widest leeway and the freest opportunity to express their opinion for or against the ratification of the Organic Act.

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the powers vested upon it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code and other pertinent election laws, RESOLVED to promulgate, as it hereby promulgates, rules and regulations defining the right of government officials and employees to publicly express their opinion on the issues related to the ratification on the amendments to the Organic Act for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao:

SECTION 1. Declaration of policy. — The Plebiscite to ratify the Amendments to the Organic Act for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (R.A. No. 9054) is not a partisan political activity.

SECTION 2. Right of government officials and employees to express opinion or to campaign for or against the ratification. — Except as hereinafter otherwise provided, all government officials and employees, including those in the Armed Forces of the Philippines, as well as those in government-owned or controlled corporations with original charters, who are residing or holding office in the provinces or cities where the plebiscite shall be held, may publicly express their opinion on any of the issues related to or campaign for or against the ratification during the campaign period. Provided, however that they shall not campaign during office hours nor use the facilities, supplies and equipment of their office for said purpose.

SECTION 3. Exceptions. — In order to maintain the independent and non-partisan status of the Commission and conformably with Section 9 of Article XIX of the Organic Act which directs the Commission to undertake an impartial information campaign thereon, the following are prohibited from campaigning for or against the ratification of the Amendments to the Organic Act:

(a) The Chairman, the commissioners and the officials and employees of the Commission; and

(b) All officials and employees of the National Government, department, offices, agencies or instrumentalities of the government, including those of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, as well as those of the government-owned or controlled corporations which the Commission has deputized for purposes of the Plebiscite.

SECTION 4. Sanctions. — Any violations of Sections 2 and 3 hereof shall be considered as an administrative offense and shall be dealt with pursuant to Section 52 (a) of the Omnibus Election Code and the pertinent provisions of P.D. 807 (The Civil Service Decree of the Philippines) and Republic Act No. 6713 (the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards For Public Officials and Employees).

SECTION 5. Implementation. — The Law Department of the Commission shall implement this resolution.

SECTION 6. Dissemination. — The Education and Information Department shall cause the publication of this resolution in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation and give the same the widest dissemination as possible.

SECTION 7. Effectivity. — This Resolution shall take effect after seven days from its publication in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

ALFREDO L. BENIPAYO
Chairman

LUZVIMINDA G. TANCANGCO
Commissioner

RALPH C. LANTION
Commissioner

RUFINO S.B. JAVIER
Commissioner

MEHOL K. SADAIN
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RESURRECCION Z. BORRA
Commissioner

FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.
Commissioner

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2) **1 SUPERVISING AGRARIAN REFORM PROGRAM OFFICER (552*) SG - 22** Bachelor's Degree relevant to the job; 3 years of relevant experience; 16 hours of relevant training; CS Professional Appropriate Eligibility for Second Level Position **(BARBD)**
3) **5 ATTORNEY III (ATY3-56, 67-1998; 70-1*, 2*, 4*) SG 21** Bachelor of Laws; 1 year of relevant experience; 4 hours of relevant training; RA 1080, **(BALA; DARAB)**
4) **1 ATTORNEY II (ATY2-6-1998) SG 18** Bachelor of Laws; Experience None Required; Training None Required; RA 1080 **(BALA)**
5) **1 SENIOR AGRARIAN REFORM PROGRAM OFFICER SG - 18** Bachelor's Degree relevant to the job; 2 years of relevant experience; 8 hours of relevant training; CS Professional Appropriate Eligibility for Second Level Position **(BLAD)**
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7) **5 LEGAL OFFICER II (LEGO2-69, 118, 140, 97, 98-1998) SG 17** Bachelor of Laws; Experience None Required; Training None Required; RA 1080 **(BALA)**
8) **1 CASHIER II (CASH2-9-1998) SG - 14** Bachelor's Degree; 1 year of relevant experience; 4 hours of relevant training; CS Professional Appropriate Eligibility for Second Level Position **(GSD)**
9) **1 ACCOUNTANT I (A1-1-1998) SG - 11** Bachelor's degree in Commerce/Business Administration major in Accounting; Experience None Required; Training None Required; RA 1080 **(ACCOUNTING DIVISION)**
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Engr. Pablo C. Asuncion, Sr.

April 28, 1924 – July 27, 2000

First Anniversary of His Birth into Eternal Life

His loving children, grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to join in prayer for the eternal repose of his soul.

Holy Masses and Prayer Vigils will be offered at the following churches today:

Immaculate Conception Parish Church Pasig City	6:00 a.m.
Christ the King Parish Church Greenmeadows Ave., Quezon City	7:00 a.m.
Shrine of Mary, Queen of Peace (Our Lady of Edsa) Edsa cor. Ortigas Ave., Quezon City	12:15 p.m.
Sanctuario de San Antonio Forbes Park, Makati City	6:00 p.m.
St. John Bosco Parish Church Pasay Road, Makati City	6:00 p.m.
Kawilihan Village Chapel Pasig City	7:00 p.m.

Our many thanks to all who keep him in their memory.

IN LOVING MEMORY
ON THE 12TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY
of

EMILIA BORJA CASIÑO

OF ILIGAN CITY

who peacefully joined her Creator on July 28, 1989
Holy Masses will be offered at the following Churches on July 28, 2001:

Redemptorist Church, *Iligan City*	6:00 AM
St. Michael's Cathedral	6:00 AM
Corpus Christi Church, *Iligan City*	6:30 AM
Inohan Sa Kinabuhi, *Iligan City*	6:00 AM
San Lorenzo Ruiz Church, *Iligan City*	6:00 AM
Sacred Heart Church *Kiwalan, Iligan City*	6:00 AM
Lugait Parish Church *Lugait, Misamis Oriental*	6:00 AM
St. Agustine Cathedral *Cagayan de Oro City*	6:00 AM
Nazareno Church *Highway Cagayan de Oro City*	6:00 AM
San Anthony de Padua Church *Cagayan de Oro City*	6:00 AM
Sacred Heart Church *Bugo, Cagayan de Oro City*	6:00 AM
St. Mary's Church *Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental*	6:00 AM
Our Lady of Guadalupe Church *Villanueva, Misamis Oriental*	6:00 AM
Immaculate Conception Church *X.U. Cagayan de Oro City*	6:00 AM
St. Joseph Cathedral *Tagbilaran City*	6:00 AM
Baclayon Parish Church *Baclayon, Bohol*	6:00 AM
Sagbayan Parish Church *Sagbayan, Bohol*	6:00 AM
Redemptorist Church, *Cebu City*	6:00 AM
Sto. Rosario Church, *Cebu City*	6:00 AM
Dingras Parish Church *Dingras, Ilocos Norte*	6:00 AM
Christ the King Church *Green Meadows, Quezon City*	6:00 AM
Shrine of Mary, Queen of Peace *Edsa corner Ortigas, Pasig*	6:00 AM

The Family and relatives request the pious readers to offer prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

CEFERINA OBIASCA - RAMOSO

of Guinobatan, Albay

Died in the Grace of our Lord on July 23, 2001.

Her beloved sons **Nilo**, **Jose** (†), **Fernando**, **Rodolfo**, **Cesar**; daughters **Ninfa**, **Teresita** (†), **Cynthia**, **Evangeline**, **Natividad**, **Nilda** and **Mia**; daughters-in-law and sons-in-law, grandchildren and great grandchildren, nephews, nieces, and other relatives request the pious reades to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the St. Peter Memorial Chapels at No. 296 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City. The remains will be transferred to Nattie Villostas' residence at No. 3-11 Rainbow Drive, Goodwill Subdivision II, Sucat, Parañaque City in the morning of July 27, 2001 (Friday) and interment wil be on Sunday - July 29, 2001 at Manila Memorial Park after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at said residence.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."
Mathew 10:39

ALICIA LOPEZ LIM

Peacefully joined her Creator on July 24, 2001 at the age of 75.

Her children and grandchildren **Dr. Norman** and **Dr. Ami Cruz-Lim**, **Dr. Noel** and **Dr. Cathy Painter-Lim**, **Nanny** and **Jenny Fenix-Lim**, **Erick**, **Jon**, **Jeremy**, **Brendan**, **Ligaya**, **Gabriel**, and **Matthew**; and all other relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Funeral Mass will be on Saturday, July 28, 2001 at 8:00 a.m. Cremation will follow after the Mass.

PELAGIA VILLALOBOS DEL MUNDO

Widow of the late **Carlos T. Del Mundo**

Peacefully joined our Lord on July 23, 2001 at the age of 78.

Her bereaved children, sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, grandchildren, great grandson, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Sta. Rita de Cascia Parish, South Lawin Avenue, Philamlife Homes, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, July 29, 2001 at the Alitagtag Cemetery, after the 1:00 pm Holy Mass at the Alitagtag Parish Church, Alitagtag, Batangas.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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AURORA ABEAR MIÑOZA Ph.D.

Born: January 4, 1923
Born to Eternal Life: July 24, 2001

***Retired Professor of the University of the Philippines**
***Former Dean of U.P. Cebu College**
***Former President of Foundation University, Dumaguete**

Her loving sisters, brothers and wards: **Sr. Leonora MMS**, **Elnora Mercado** (Denver, Colorado), **Dr. Miflora Gatchalian**, **Gervasio Jr.** (San Diego, CA), **Graciano**, **Edison**, **Virgincita & Antonio Arigo**.

Her remains lie in state at Chapel B of Cebu Rolling Hills Memorial Chapels, Inc. A.S. Fortuna Street, Banilad, Mandaue City.

Funeral Mass at 1:00 p.m. at Cebu Rolling Hills Memorial Chapels celebrated by Monsignor Elias Matarlo, on Saturday, July 28, 2001.

Interment follows at Sagrado Corazon Cemetery, Catmon, Cebu.

Special Mass will be held at the Chapel of the Holy Sacrifice, U.P. Diliman, Quezon City on Monday, July 30, 2001 at 6:00 p.m.

Relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

BETELINA UMIPIG LAMORENA

Of Sta. Maria, Ilocos Sur
and Quezon City
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Peacefully joined her Creator on July 26, 2001.

Her beloved sisters **Teresita**, **Zenaida** (†), **Esperanza**, **Bella**; her brothers **Vicente** (†) and **Eduardo**; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, nephews, nieces, grandchildren, relatives and dear friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Nacional Memorial Homes, 264 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.

GEDEON GARCIA PALOMAR

"Mang ED"

Now peacefully rests in the infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord on July 26, 2001 at the age of 68.

His family wishes to inform relatives and friends that his remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, July 29, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque after the 9:00 AM Mass.

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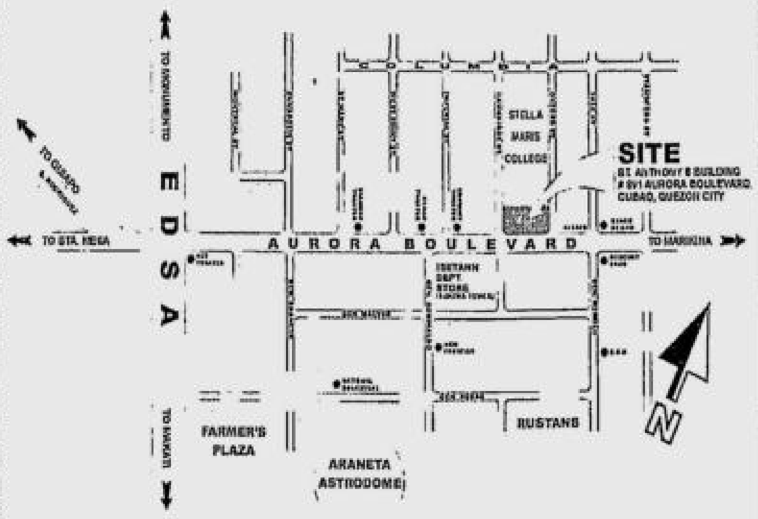

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Two things are certain in life . . . taxes and technology

By Michael Dana N. Montero
SGV & Co.

TAX-FILES

DESPITE all the controversies hounding the agency, the BIR has stuck to the task at hand of collecting taxes. In the hope of rebuilding its image and at the same time catching up with recent technological advancements, the BIR has introduced the Electronic Filing and Payment System (EFPS) or what is known as the e-Filing and e-Payment system.

Now it can be said, in life nowadays there are two things certain—taxes and technology.

EFPS, e-Filing and e-Payment—The BIR moving forward. Briefly, the EFPS is the electronic processing and transmission of tax return information made over the Internet through the BIR website. The information processed and transmitted through the EFPS includes attachments and even taxes due to the government.

The process of filing tax returns including attachments through the Internet, or e-Filing, is done through BIR-supplied validation and computation rules designed to efficiently check for completeness and correctness of taxpayer input.

On the other hand, e-Payment is the process of paying taxes through the Internet banking facilities of Authorized Agent Banks (AABs).

RMC No. 24-2001

Revenue Memorandum Circular (RMC) No. 24-2001, issued last May 28, 2001, provides for the enrollment procedures prior to EFPS.

The RMC lays the groundwork for the BIR To comply with the Electronic Commerce Act (Republic Act No. 8792), which mandates that all concerned agencies enforce the provisions of the law.

Ideally, the BIR hopes that the EFPS is just a first step in achieving paperless filing of returns and payment of taxes.

As a requisite to avail of the EFPS, the concerned taxpayer shall enroll under the provisions of RMC No. 24-2001 starting June 1, 2001.

While the RMC provides that the EFPS initially covers non-large taxpayers identified by the commissioner of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and large taxpayers registered with the Integrated Tax System (ITS) with e-mail account and Internet access, the BIR encourages all taxpayers to eventually use the EFPS.

Enrollment procedure

Before availing of the EFPS, the following enrollment procedures shall be observed by all qualified taxpayers:

a) Access the BIR website at http://www.bir.gov.ph;

b) Read the EFPS webpage (RMC No. 24-2001 and FAQs for first time users);

c) Click on the EFPS button;

d) Click on the "Filing & Payment" text graphic;

e) Click on "Enroll with EFPS" option;

f) Complete the required fields on the Enrollment Form page. You can enroll only once. Don't forget your username, password and your answer to your challenge question. Take note of how you encode them, as they are case sensitive.

Since you will be required to submit an e-mail account, only one e-mail account will be allowed for EFPS purposes. After accomplishing the required fields, click on "Submit"; and

g) Wait for the e-mail notification from the large taxpayer assistance service section/revenue district office-taxpayer assistance service section (LTAS/RDO-TASS) of the BIR confirming your enrolment and the activation or rejection of your on-line account. Expect the e-mail notification within three to 10 days. Once your account has been activated, you are ready to e-file.

After enrolment with the EFPS is done, the following are the requirements to avail of the system: (1) registration with the BIR-Integrated Tax System and (2) Board Resolution authorizing any of the two officers designated to file the return and who shall enroll for usage of the system.

The two officers can be the president or other principal officer, treasurer or assistant treasurer of the corporation.

To check whether the person enrolled in the EFPS is authorized by the taxpayer-company, the BIR will verify the board resolution submitted by the company. In case the authorized person is no longer connected with the company, the user name can be changed to secure the company's system profile.

If a corporation intends to e-pay, enrollment with an AAB is also required. For e-Payment, the tax payments are simply debited from the taxpayer's enrolled bank account.

To facilitate the speedy approval of the enrolment, enrollees must satisfy all requirements. In addition, the BIR also ensures that the data supplied in the enrolment form is consistent with those in the registration database of the BIR. Some of the reasons/grounds for the rejection of enrolment include:

a) the taxpayer is found to be bogus after investigation;

b) the e-mail address does not exist; and

c) the person enrolled is not authorized by the board of directors.

Software, hardware requirements

To use the EFPS, the following hardware and software are required:

a) a computer with a modem;

b) an internet service provider;

c) a browser like Microsoft Internet Explorer version 5 or higher or Netscape Navigator or Communicator version 4.6 or higher; and

d) an e-mail account.

Scope or coverage of the EFPS

For its initial implementation, the EFPS allows e-Filing for 13 tax return forms, including (a) monthly remittance return for income taxes withheld on compensation as well as for creditable income taxes withheld; (b) quarterly remittance return of final taxes on fringe benefits paid to employees other than rank and file; (c) annual income tax return for individuals earning purely compensation income and for corporations and partnerships; (d) excise tax return for alcohol, petroleum and tobacco products; (e) monthly and quarterly value added tax declaration/return; and (f) quarterly percentage tax return.

Advantage and security features of the EFSP. Convenience is the main advantage to using the EFPS. The system is interactive, information is immediate and online, resulting in a much quicker response or acknowledgement time. Since the information is validated, the possibility of error is greatly minimized.

Moreover, taxes can be paid on-line through the Internet banking facilities of AABs. More importantly, there are no additional costs that the taxpayer will bear upon availment of the system and the system is available 24 hours a day and seven days a week, even on holidays.

With regard to the security of the transactions done through the EFPS system, the transmission of data on every transaction is encrypted. This is secured by state-of-the-art technology such as SSL (Secure Sockets Layer), which is the industry-standard protocol for secure Web-based communications and VERISIGN.

Likewise, user validation or authentication is handled by the system's enrolment and log on facility. Taxpayers are encouraged to change their passwords regularly or on a periodic basis as an added security measure.

In case a taxpayer forgets his/her password, a written request to the BIR for re-enrollment must be submitted. A written communication from the BIR will be sent informing the taxpayer that the request has been approved.

As of the writing of this article, the BIR website still has some technical hitches that may be encountered in the execution of the steps outlined above. However, the BIR has assured that they are currently working on the technical problems and will have the EFPS working just in time for the expected deluge of taxpayer-applicants.

So what lesson can we learn? The next time things get a bit too tense and hot, just turn on your computer and channel your energies to all available high-tech but less violent activities. It's the wave of the future . . . and it's less taxing.

Catsup firm finds key to selling is in tasting

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

MARKETING STRATEGY

THE PHILIPPINES has secured a place in the food processing history for, among other things, introducing banana catsup to the world.

The sweet/sour red blend is found in virtually every Filipino home, and accounts for 95 percent of the so-called red sauce market, which includes sweet chili sauce and hot sauce.

This long association that Filipinos have for banana catsup poses a challenge then for companies to convince Filipinos to patronize the Heinz Tomato Ketchup.

Heinz UFC Philippines Inc., however, believes that it has formulated the right strategy to take away a slice of the market from the current leader and to grow the market, and it is anchored on going direct to the consumers through sampling and taste tests.

The strategy was culled from the expertise of H.J. Heinz Co., one of the world's leading food processors and Nutri-Asia, the holding company of Universal Food Corp. and Southeast Asia Food Inc., controlled by a group of Filipino businessmen led by Joselito D. Campos Jr.

UFC is the manufacturer of the UFC banana catsup, the market leader in the growing banana catsup leader while SAFI manufactures the Papa and Jufran banana catsup brands, as well as the Datu Puti and Mang Tomas brands of sauces and condiments.

"One of the strategies we have found to be most effective is sampling because this allows them to try our product. We believe that once they try the Heinz tomato ketchup, they will prefer it over the competition," explains Heinz UFC chief operating officer Luis F. Alejandro.

Targeting the residential market goes hand in hand with the sampling of the Heinz tomato ketchup to food outlets. Many food service organizations have already switched brands and now serve Heinz Tomato Ketchup in their outlets.

Alejandro attributes the easy acceptance of Filipinos to the Heinz catsup to the formulation.

IT IS a challenge to sell tomato catsup in the country that invented banana catsup.

He says the Heinz is a little on the sweet side, which is preferred by Filipinos, and not as sour as the leading brand. Heinz conducted marketing tests prior to the launch of the Heinz ketchup brand in April this year and Alejandro claims that the customers almost always preferred the Heinz taste.

The key, he says, lies in getting people to actually taste the product, especially since Filipinos are die-hard banana catsup fanatics.

"The market for catsup is very unique because those who use banana catsup don't like tomato catsup because it is more of an acquired taste. Those who like tomato catsup, on the other hand, will never switch to banana catsup. The two markets are unique and they don't cross," Alejandro says.

Banana catsup accounts for some 90 percent of catsup market, and the total red sauce market grows at 8 percent a year, three times the population growth, indicating a huge potential for growth for condiment manufacturers.

The unique set of catsup consumers is one reason behind the separate advertising campaigns for the UFC, Papa and Jufran banana catsup brands and Heinz.

The advertising for the banana catsup brands targets the mass market while the campaign for Heinz Tomato Ketchup caters to the preferences of the A,B and upper C markets.

"Our advertising is grounded on consumer benefits and we make sure that we follow through on what we say. Like if we say that our catsup has Vitamins A and B, it means that there really are vitamins in every bottle. For tomato catsup, we have lycopene which is good value for us," Alejandro says.

The multi-pronged advertising strategy has worked well for Heinz UFC, as sales have exceeded expectations, just three months after the products were introduced in the local market.

With growing market acceptance, the Heinz Co. has indicated plans to increase its product lines to eventually include cooking sauces and other condiments.

"We want to succeed in the tomato catsup market in the same way that we have succeeded in selling banana catsup," Alejandro adds.

Aid to ads: Professional marketing

(From page B12)

with J&J. To J&J, professional marketing is a vital part of its operations and who better person to implement it than the one was there from the start.

Andres quit J & J in July 2000. She joined Aquagem soon after leaving the multinational firm. Aquagem's staff has since grown to 20.

Its first partner company was Johnson & Johnson Phils. Inc., which entrusted to the professional marketing services firm the implementation of its programs like The Omnibus Baby Hospital Detailing Program, Adult Skin and Hair Program, and the Oral Health Care Program.

These professional educational activities enhanced the image of J&J as an authority on baby care, skin and oral health and established the firm as a partner to various medical societies.

What exactly does Aquagem do?

It draws up a marketing program for a firm—not the traditional type and usually via educational programs.

"Our priority is health education, secondary is the promotion of the products," says Andres.

After it draws up the program, it implements it. The company shoulders all the costs and the plans are implemented over a fixed period that ranges from one year to five years.

Aquagem earns by getting a percentage of the total cost of the program, and a fee for drawing up the marketing plan.

Program costs average about P3 million a year depending on its nature and scope. Most of its partner firms implement five-year programs.

Its biggest clients so far are Unilab Consumer Health for its products that include Alaxan, Nutroplex and Enervon C; J&J for their baby products and Reckitt Benckiser for Lysol.

Andres says Aquagem has 20 regular employees but it has over 100 people under its payroll for the numerous programs it implements.

It describes itself as a "dynamic and specialized company that provides excellent manpower, training and consulting services."

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BUSINESS Friday

MARGIE QUIMPO-ESPINO, Business Features Editor

Aid to ads: Professional marketing

JEHAN Gandamra, Michelle Moralejo, Ramil Cabisada, Maous Vasquez and Cathy Andres.

BY MARGIE QUIMPO-ESPINO

IN 1993, consumer product manufacturer Johnson & Johnson in the US conducted a survey among doctors and found out that despite advertising, medical practitioners still influence consumers' choices of healthcare products.

With this realization, the long time manufacturer of baby products ventured into a different kind of professional marketing that is education-based.

Professional marketing is similar to medical marketing wherein a drug firm hires medical representatives to "push" their products, usually prescription items, among doctors. But in the case of professional marketing, the products being pushed are non-prescription ones and made by consumer healthcare firms.

"Professional marketing is really old. It is the flagship activity of pharmaceutical companies called medical marketing. Professional marketing is an enhancement of medical marketing," explains Cathy del Rosario-Andres, program director of Aquagem Professional Marketing Services Inc,, probably the only firm in the country that provides this kind of service.

What makes it different from medical marketing, she adds, is the focus. Medical marketing focuses on the features and benefits of the products.

"Under professional marketing, we offer health education programs rather than just detailing the products," Andres adds.

Andres was with J&J Philippines when it embarked on a professional marketing program eight years ago. She was in charge of J&J's health education programs and networked extensively with the doctors.

But an agency was hired to implement the bulk of the programs.

Some of the people in the agency soon became restless and Andres felt it would be a waste if they went their separate ways. She prompted her sister to put up a company and work with the agency people—Chinki Bariso, Ramil Cabisada, Chia Chan and Chey Castillo.

Aquagem was born in Aug. 1999.

The name Aqua represents life—an illustration of a free-flowing source of information—information that can move people to lead a healthier lifestyle.

The "gem" represents strength, transparency and brilliance.

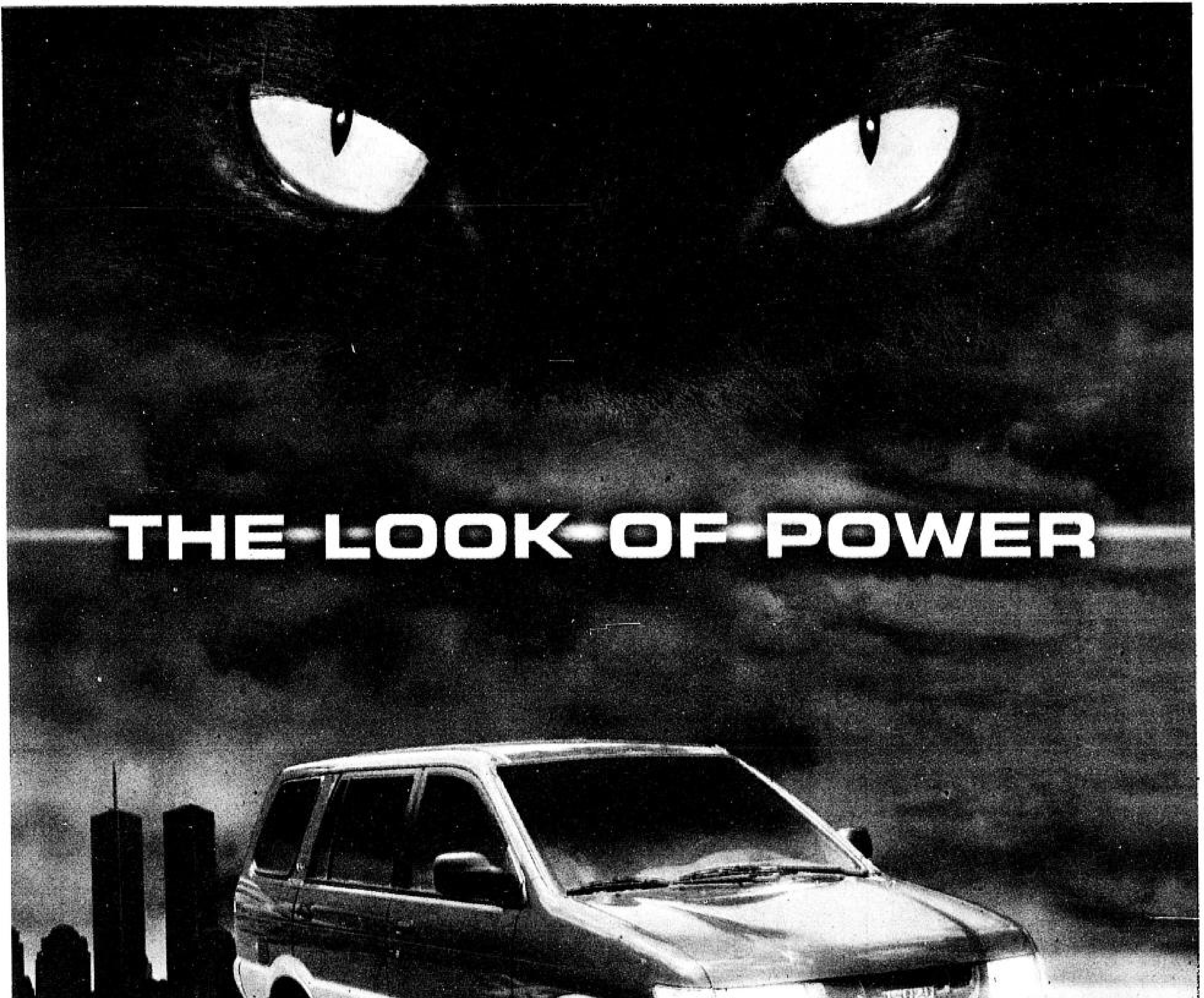
When J&J worldwide reorganized, which involved the regionalization of production and even operations, Andres found herself shuttling between Singapore and the Philippines extensively.

"At first it was fun but after a while I realized it was having an effect on my children, especially my youngest who was in pre-school," she recalls.

It reached a point when Andres had to make a crucial decision. She chose family.

But that was not the end of her relationship

AID/ B11



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FRAMES Unlimited's Daniel and Pam Tan.

Couple finds fortune in prints and frames

BY JOEL V. NIGOS

FRAMED artworks usually adorn Filipino homes—from those in posh villages to the most humble dwellings. So couple Daniel and Pam Tan thought to themselves why not make a business out of it.

They started out as suppliers of raw materials to manufacturers of mostly imported frames and artworks, and eventually moved on to producing the frames themselves. Thus was born Frames Unlimited Inc.

"We have a wide array of designs that are not freely available from other art suppliers in the country," says Daniel, president of Frames Unlimited, maker of Elite Arts and Frames.

The prints feature traditional and contemporary subjects, including reproduction of the works of the world's finest artists, from the great old masters to some of today's most talented painters.

These works of art, according to Daniel, suit various aesthetic tastes, decorative schemes, and cater to different markets.

"Our products use licensed fade-résistant prints and designs that come from the US, Canada, Europe and Asia," Daniel, a computer course graduate in Vancouver, Canada, stresses.

He says the company uses superior quality mat boards made of wood pulp fibers and calcium carbonate.

These mat boards, Daniel says, are 100-percent acid-free to protect the artworks and the prints.

"We also use imported frames that are made from high-quality wood materials and are painted or treated by non-fade paints," adds Daniel.

These are made in their production house in Sta. Mesa.

"The business grew from word-of-mouth, we haven't advertised," says Pam, the company's vice president, noting that their list of clientele expanded mostly from referrals of customers who are satisfied with their products and service.

She says they try to keep up with customers' demands by taking their suggestions to heart.

"We have a catalogue where the customers can choose the designs and the materials that they want to be used, and we also design based on their suggestions," Pam, a business management graduate of Ateneo de Manila, relates.

The couple is very much involved in the business that they visit their outlets from time to time to make sure that customers are properly dealt with.

Frames Unlimited supplies artworks and decorative frames to department stores of SM in Megamall, Cubao, Manila and Makati, all Rustan's branches, Robinsons Galleria and Sure Value in Subic.

They have their own retail outlet in Greenhills, their first branch, in SM Centerpoint and Sucat, and Greenbelt.

"We want our products to decorate every home in the country and to establish a top-of-mind brand name," Daniel and Pam say when asked what they wanted their business to be in the future.

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The Moon, the Goddess, the President

BY GEORGINA C. SOLINA

THE MOON in Aries in the Philippine horoscope, which represents the feminine, is very powerful. It is more potent than the Sun in Gemini, which represents the masculine.

Because being strongly lunar in nature, the Filipino women carry the Moon's protective and psychological atmosphere around the human psyche (soul), especially the young ones' psyche, protecting it from the full blast of the soul's impulse toward immediate and total solar enlightenment.

It is the Moon's phase at our birth that shows how instinctual, how conscious and how absorbent we are toward the Sun's light, our soul's evolvement, because on our way to enlightenment we have to pass the Moon first. Later in our maturity and wisdom, we learn intuitively that it is through the Moon's phases that we get our mission orders for this incarnation.

A case in point is President Macapagal-Arroyo's Moon phase 14, which has a significant bearing on her becoming the Republic's 14th president.

Here, we have to begin at the beginning—to begin in our mother's womb, to be given birth and rocked in a cradle as a baby, to learn our first loving lessons at our mother's lap, and the loving, learning process continues throughout life

THE MOON/ p.C4

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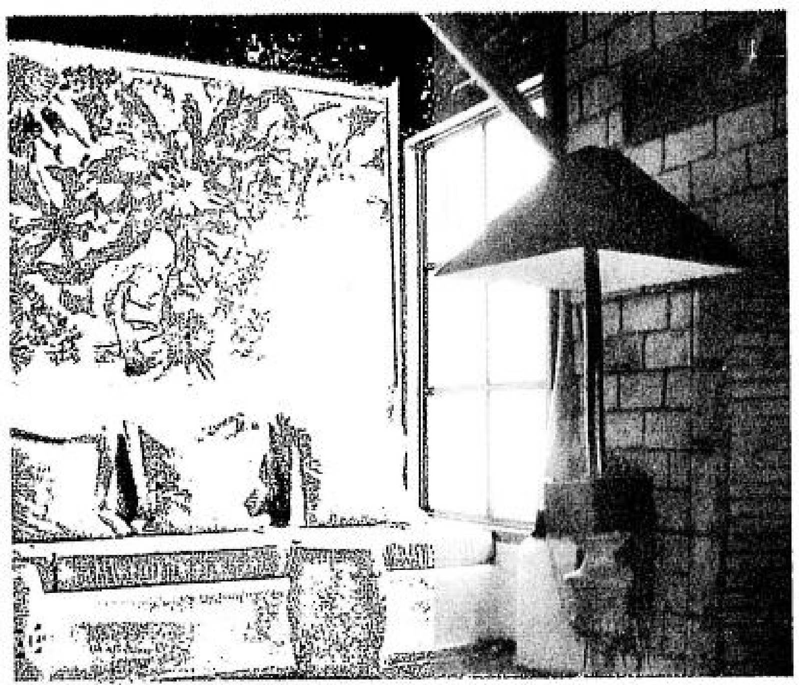
SEASONED WITH TIME. The place is a rustic assemblage of woods from an old church that make up the posts, exposed ceiling and buffet table. The fretwork becomes visual screens. Vigan tiles add warmth. The exposed joists become part of the ceiling design.

VIEW FROM THE LOFT. The house is a combination of rustic and modern features such as a built-in sofa and votive candles in the fireplace.

Amanpulo in Tagaytay

By Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Chito Vecina
Photo direction by Albert Avellana

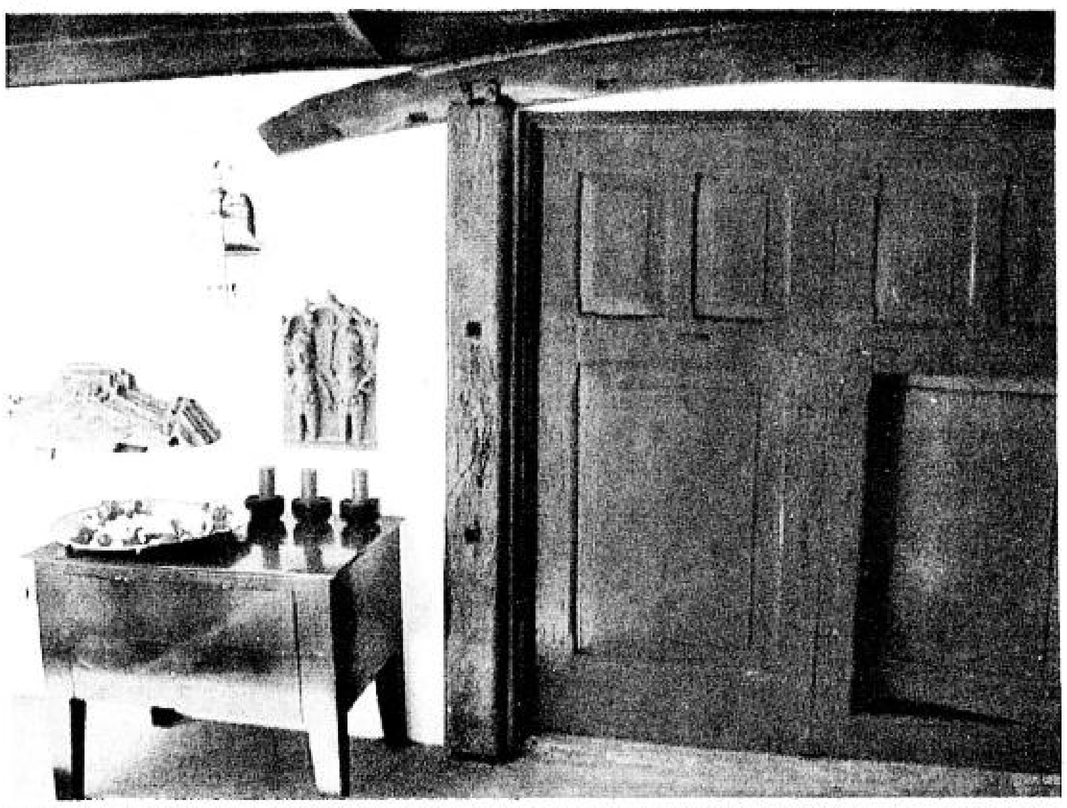


IN FULL BLOOM. No Diaz home is complete without sister Isabel's acrylic mural. The concrete ledge with cushioned seats and throw pillows. A baluster from a communion rail is made into a lamp stand.

IT'S hard to believe that the Diaz family's weekend home in Tagaytay used to follow the lines of an American country home. Except for the exposed A-framed ceiling with a loft and the generous use of old wood and Vigan tiles, the house by the ridge hardly showed traces of its old self.

Instead, we saw a quaint Filipino home with Balinese touches mirrored in eclectic accent pieces, hidden corners and open spaces. Two rooms, one linked from the garden by a wooden bridge with carved posts, are separated from the main house.

"My late father Jimmy acquired the property 35 years ago, when everybody favored Baguio over Tagaytay," says Georgie Diaz, younger sister of actress and former Miss Universe Gloria Diaz. "His dream was to build something like this. Nowadays everybody wants to spend weekends in Tagaytay"



RED DOOR. Old posts and the church door with *bandejas* are sourced from ancient buildings. The bas-reliefs are also architectural fragments.

Georgie and American husband William Balliett revisited the place and fell in love with the weather and sweeping view of Taal Lake. They lost no time building a house there six years ago. The couple drew inspiration from an earlier drawing Georgie's sister Isabel did for their dad. Now, it has become one of the clan's favorite weekend haunts—complete with such outdoor amenities as a trampoline for the kids, ping-pong table and a giant pizza oven for those garden parties.

Going American country was a normal impulse given the city's cool mountain climate and lush vegetation. Wheels from old *calesas*, even the head of a horned animal once adorned the house. "I woke up one night and thought I saw the devil," she says, referring to the preserved trophy's silhouette. They had to go.

In due time, Georgie, with a little help from sisters Isabel, Ruby and Coroy, changed the house's look from "rustic to romantic." She also sought help from good friends Gabby Barredo and Nise Cojuangco. "Actually, I made drastic changes just before you came," she says in jest, before showing us around.

The overall look, she says, is inspired by Amanpulo, that posh resort in northern Palawan: thatched roof made of *anahaw*, glass-paneled bathrooms facing verdant hills and the lake below (how's that for indecent exposure?) and a different sink in every bathroom. The one in the bedroom by the garden, for instance, is a giant pottery mounted on a concrete base. A huge glass bowl set on a glass ledge doubles as a sink in another bathroom.

Evident touch

Georgie's touch is evident in a series of low, off-center chandeliers made of various materials. A chandelier in the living room, for instance, is fashioned from old *verinas* and glass buntings by Coroy. The one by the dining room, made of twisted wrought iron, hang a few feet above the table. Still another, curved wooden pieces with dangling glass accents, acts as a focal point in the lanai.

At the same time, the house is also a haven for used and found objects. One has to be nursing a stiff neck to miss the structure's high ceiling with exposed wooden beams. The wood originally belonged to a 17th century Roman Catholic church in Aringay, La Union, the family's hometown. The structure had withstood the test of time until the July 16, 1990 earthquake devastated most of northern Luzon, including Aringay.

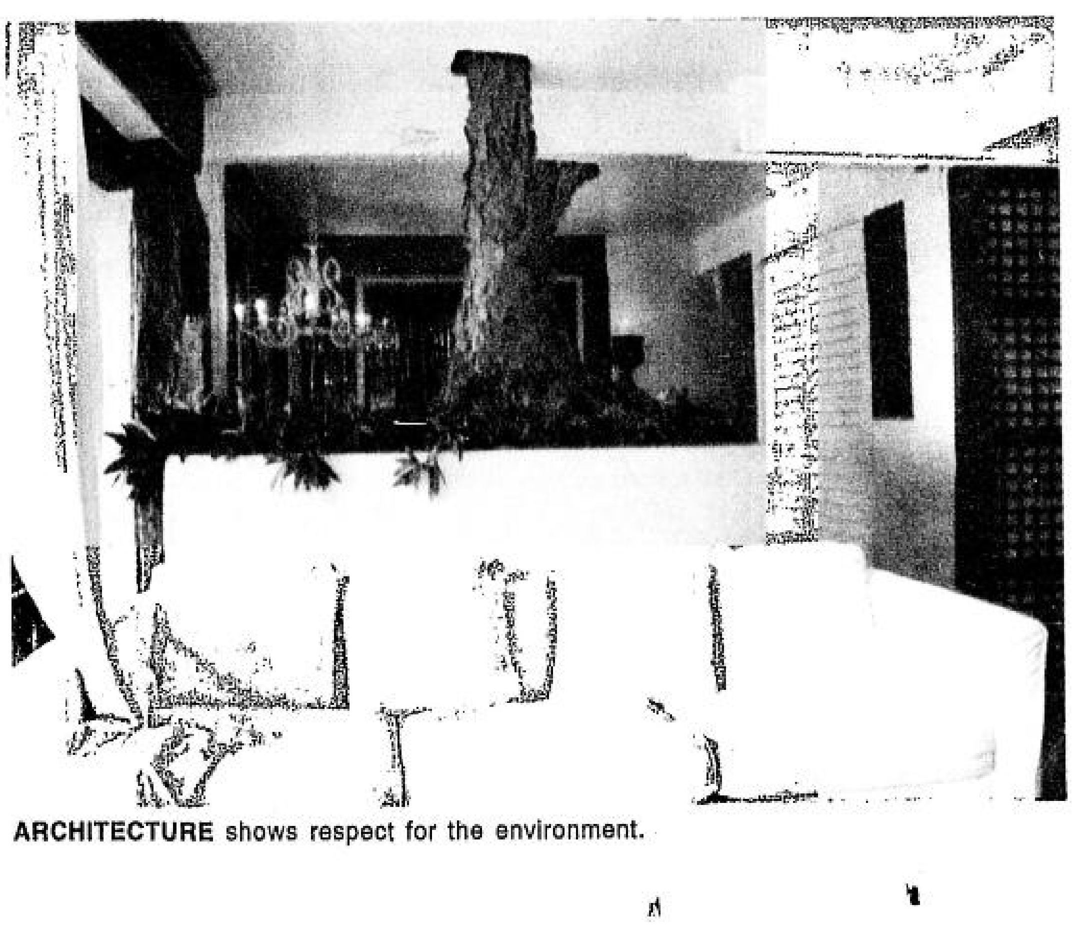
The family contributed to the church's reconstruction, but the old wood had to go. Georgie and one of her brothers (the Diaz family has 10 girls and two boys) were among the lucky ones who became the wood's new custodians.

Vestiges of the past can also be seen in posts, ledges, doors and doorjambs taken from the old church. Carved communion rails, for instance, were turned into lamp stands. These antique elements have been cleverly juxtaposed with concrete white walls, ledges and a brick fireplace. Instead of smoldering firewood, however, we found a row of votive candles in its place.

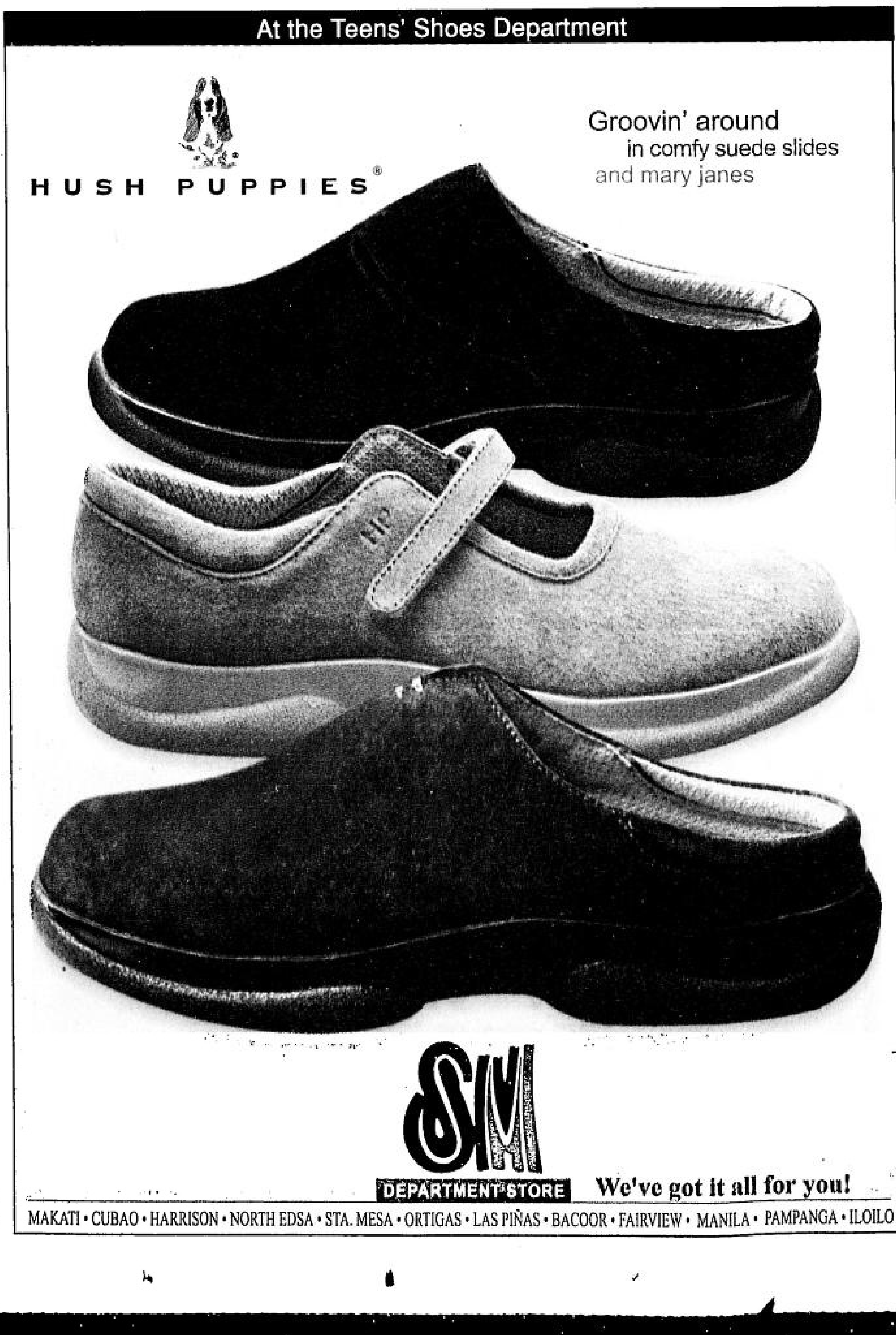
"It can get quite cold here during certain months," she says. "But we can do without a fireplace." Her family's bold artworks are probably enough to keep the house warm. Isabel's signature acrylic painting of summer blooms hang by the living room, while brother Ramon's idea of marine life, also in acrylic, adorns the bedroom by the loft. The Diaz matriarch is also into painting.

Yes, a portion of the high ceiling has been

AMANPULO/p.C3



ARCHITECTURE shows respect for the environment.



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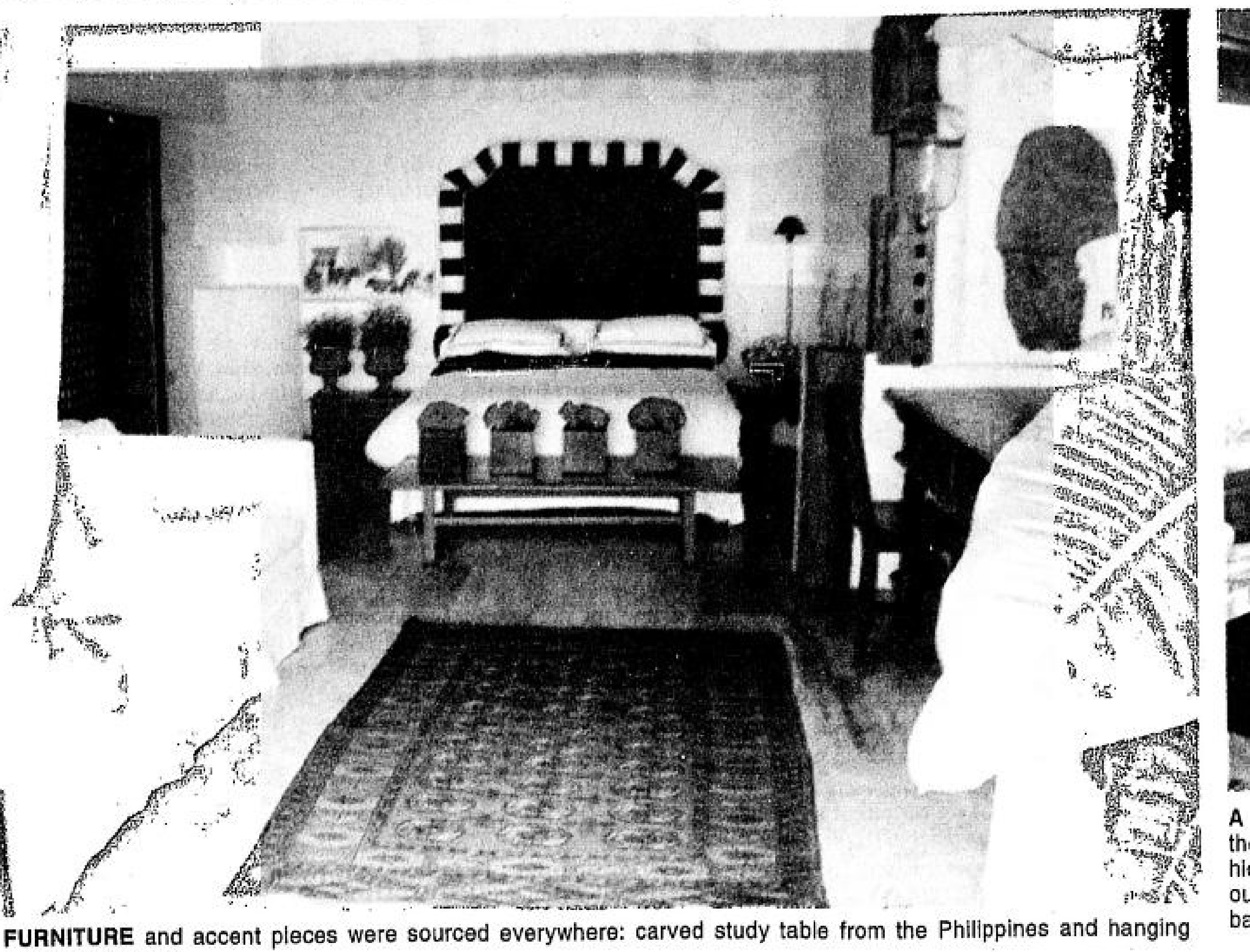


FURNITURE and accent pieces were sourced everywhere: carved study table from the Philippines and hanging lamps from India.

A CORNER of the bathroom is hidden from the outside by bamboo poles

Amanpulo in Tagaytay

(From page C2)

transformed into a living space, complete with easy chairs and a four-poster bed. A spiral staircase leads to the bedroom by the loft. In turn, the area provides a sweeping view of the living room below.

The entire property gradually slopes from the highway. Thus, the first floor has enough room for another secluded living space below. A flight of stairs descends to a bedroom awash in white—from the bed, sofa, down to the walls. Swinging *capiz* windows that double as native shutters impart the room with some semblance of privacy—until one enters the bathroom.

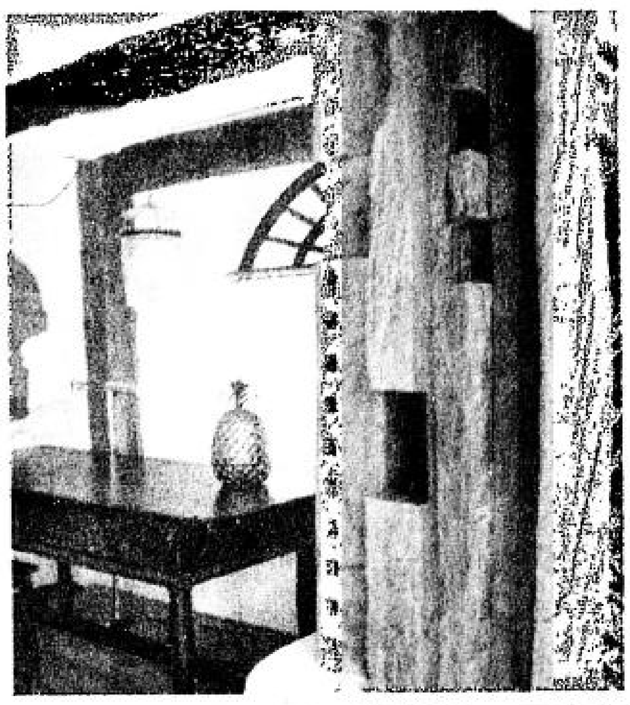
The bathroom virtually allows the outside in through glass panels and picture windows obscured from the outside by shrubs and flowering plants. "What's there to be ashamed of," Georgie teases. "It's just between you and nature out there."

Native cottage

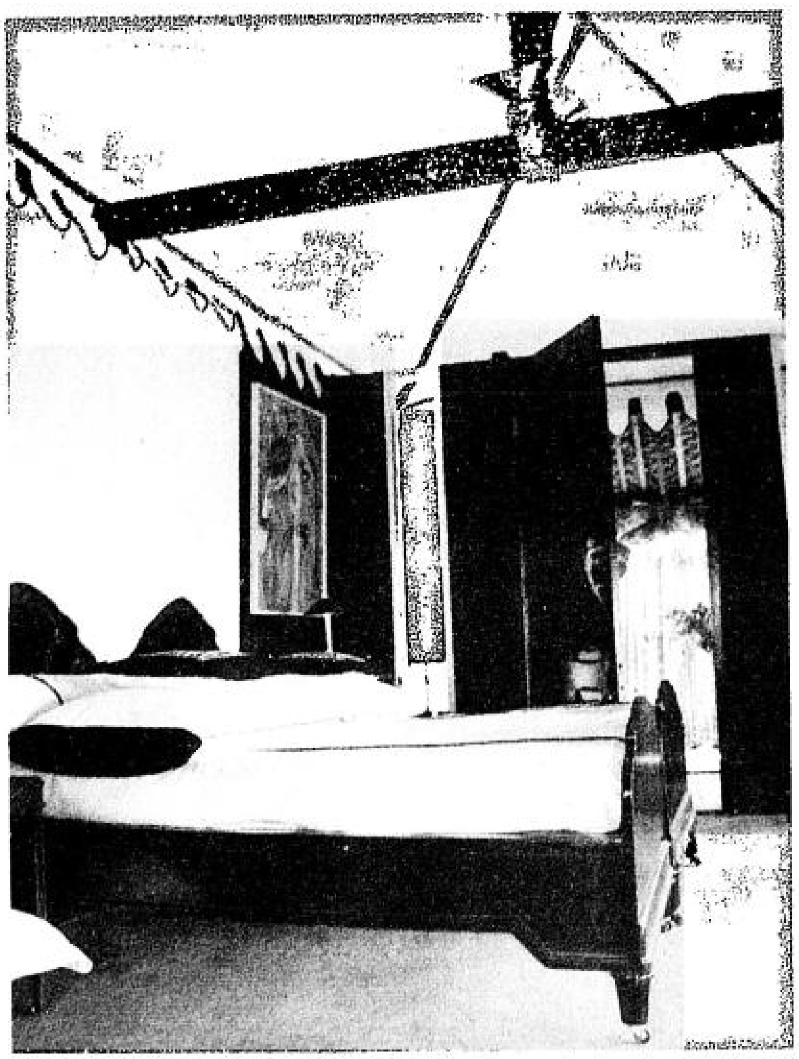
Another bathroom, this time in the bedroom by the garden, is also virtually exposed to the elements. Aside from glass panels, bamboo poles with glass accents section the area from the outside. Georgie softened the bamboo wall by sticking a white anthurium in each accent. A bamboo pole lining a glass panel doubles as a towel rack. Be sure, though, to take the umbrella with you before taking a bath. Georgie did away with the roof in the shower area. "I want guests to feel a sense of romance. And they need not be married to each other," she says with a wink.

The entire structure resembles a native cottage from the outside, but not from the inside. Again, the bedroom is blanketed in white (with black accents), including the structure's thatched *anahaw* ceiling. No, Georgie didn't spray paint the ceiling. Rather, a white canopy conceals it to achieve a cleaner, more modern feel. "This is the tent room," says Georgie. "I've limited the color of the interior to black and white to make the place look more chic."

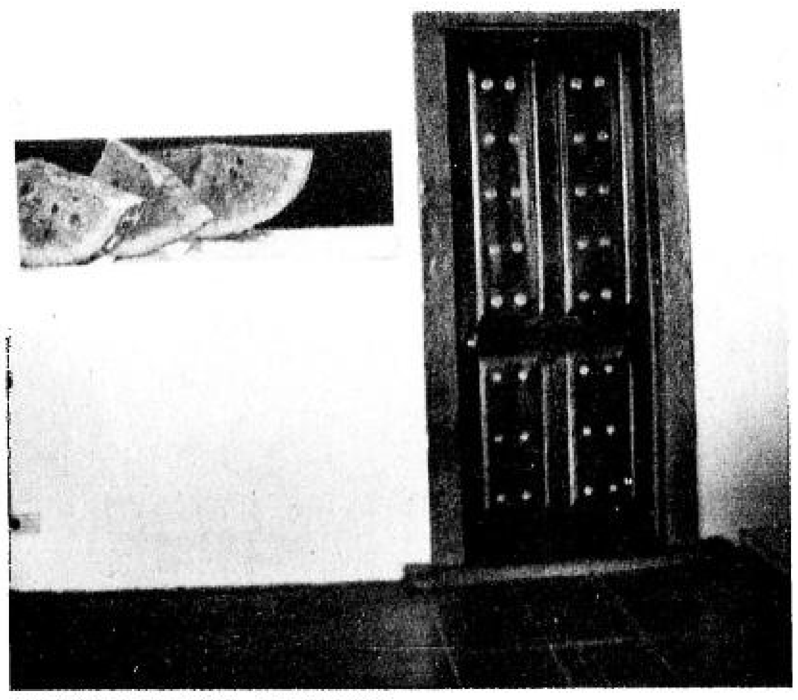
AMANPULO/p.C6



POSTS and jambs from the old church have found their way into one of the bedrooms.



BLACK door leading to the washroom is accented with black and gold studs. The room is characterized by a tent ceiling with exposed beams and uplighting.



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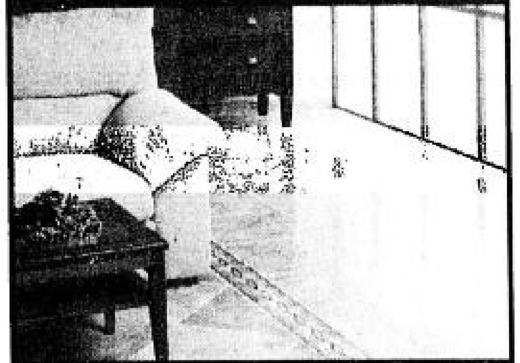

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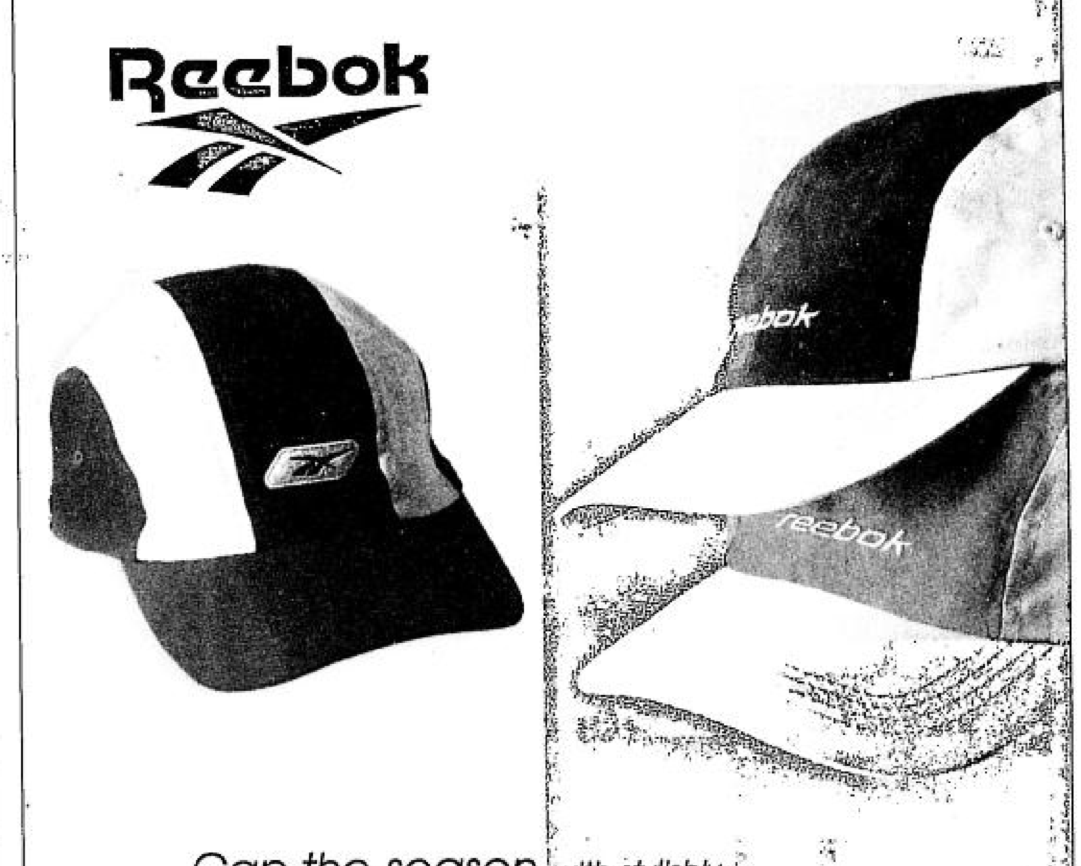

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The Moon, the Goddess, the President

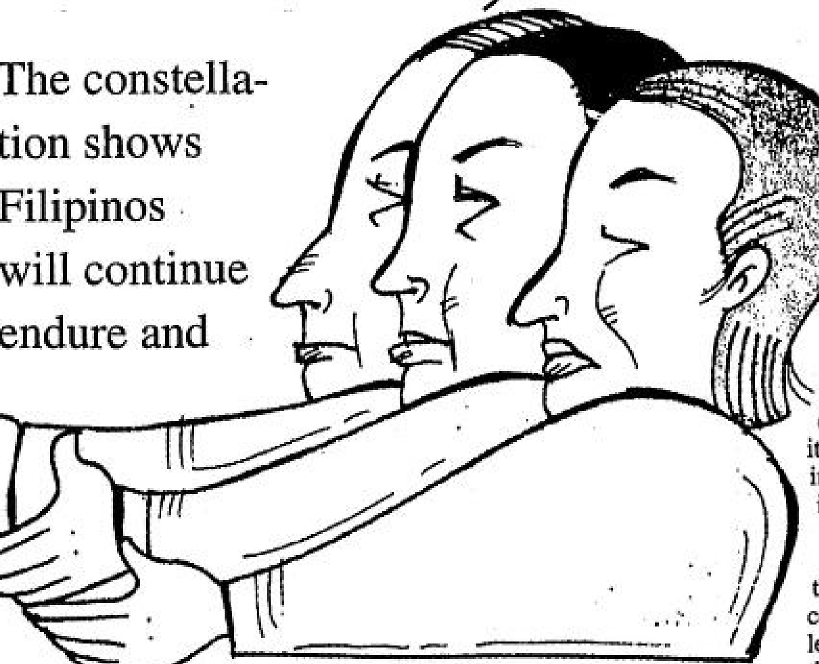

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

The constellation shows Filipinos will continue endure and prevail with a woman at the helm

(From page C1)

with our mother. Even when we are already married and settled, we always run to mother for a loving hug and a warm companionship that recharge our waning batteries (like the waning moon after a full moon).

However, the relationship does not end in the tomb. For our true home is in the realm of the Spirit.

In any system, the Goddess, the female species rules the home—what is meant by settling in a place—and so they are the guardians of place. They guard the planet Earth, which is our Home.

Women carry intuitive knowledge about the real purpose of place. If their family or home is threatened, their instinctive knowledge of war comes out. They are natural warriors or kings. As the patriarchy has taken power on Earth for the past thousands, women have been considered inferior and they have been displaced as rulers.

Women know about alchemy, which is the process of transforming something ordinary into something precious. As the new millennium unfolds with its major paradigm shift in consciousness, we start to see the return of women as warriors and rulers as men have been incapacitated to govern or have failed to deliver. Notice the way more and more notable movies are showing the imprint of the Goddess energy these days—an outstanding example is the 2000 Oscar-winning Chinese movie, "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon."

Moon's silver ray vibrations

The Sun in the Seventh House has no harmonious trines to other planets, but has a power conjunction with Pluto and Neptune, which has a negative square to Midheaven, indicating a strong potential for generating scandals, like troubles in high government positions coming from the more aggressive, dominant masculine sector.

It would appear that our salvation as a nation would come from the Filipino women who feel energy through the Moon's silver ray vibrations. This kind of perception is the silvery gossamer light shimmering on the surface calm of water when the full Moon rises.

The Moon in Aries, with its harmonious, positive trines to Saturn conjunct Uranus, is completely balanced between the old traditions of the past. The past incarnations included karma, fate (Saturn) and the innovative, revolutionary ideas of the world's new destiny (Uranus) resonating with the rhythms of ancient myths, folklore, symbols and archetypes of the past. The past, present and future are all one interconnected Now, what esotericists call the Eternal present, which cancels out linear time and space.

Because the Moon's primary function is to reflect our emotions, our planetary feelings, being feminine in nature, it's the women who will mirror the consciousness of Mother Earth back to us. Women know how to create in time and activate space for new life, and so they will lead the men into a new alchemy, which will move us into realms that will stretch us beyond the limitations of time and space.

The Moon comes from Jupiter, which rules the mastery schools of Earth. Mastery of the self is based on whether we deal with our emotions effectively, and whether we maintain the necessary balance, peace and serenity.

Making choices in the planet of choice

Humanity is splitting into two groups. Now that people are getting more agitated by the intense emotional-body cleansing, we are all beginning to spiral upward in the act of making the right choices. This cleansing has to happen because if negative action is not released, we cannot withstand the increasing photon light as the healing of the planet is now making its jump-start or quantum leap to a higher dimension of spirit consciousness. Here, we have no choice. It's Fate. It's Fate, and it's the Feminine God that's now mandating it.

Moon Phase 14 and the President

We cannot hit the ground running without sufficient oxygen in our blood brought about by spirit-connecting photon light. It is the light that comes from the void of creation. It makes us think about the ultimate concerns of the Divine for mankind's evolvement. We would not survive now by simply staying material beings, loaded with material agendas. And as humanity is splitting into groups, people are polarized—one group is on high alert, intending to somehow find clarity and health. The other avoids looking within, waiting for changes to occur outside of them to favor them, while dark, elemental forces rage within (imprisoned in physical bodies polluted by chemicals).

The healing of the Planet Earth is being done by the Mother Goddess now, allowing people worldwide to release the fire-breathing dragons, and slimy, creepy foul-smelling monsters of their dark, historical past for the purpose of grappling with them in order to eschew them out of their systems. In our country, the purging has been particularly monumental. We have to clean up this great amount of toxins that have piled up for centuries. We have to start from within ourselves. We also have to start from the outside—literally, the life-threatening toxic waste that pollutes our air, lands and seas.

The Planet cannot heal itself without first healing humanity that has been responsible for her getting sick. It's therefore very important to scrutinize how all men and women, especially the leaders, are vibrating, since they can only function by resonant vibrations if they have to succeed. They need to resonate in their feminine aspect if they are men. The feminine aspect has the higher faculties of Intuition, the part of the Mind that is not limited by linear time and space in its infinitely vast perceptual operations transcending logic and reason. When we hear the wise say, "The heart has its reasons the mind cannot grasp," they are referring to our higher intuitional faculties.

The function of catastrophe is precisely to rouse people and their leaders to pull away from their disastrous money-hungry vibrations escalating to bring about the Big Divide, which was clearly objectified in the May 1 siege of Malacañang. It had to happen in order to test the strength of a fledgling presidency. It happened during Macapagal-Arroyo's first 100 days.

It had to happen if only to objectify that 70 percent of the country's population are poor and have been neglected by government in past decades. Gloria, in fact, was still a little girl living in the presidential palace when her father, President Diosdado Macapagal, opened the gates of Malacañang to allow the poor to meet with him and air their complaints—at least, his heart opened up to them. Under her father, the Philippines ranked second only to Japan in the Asian economic race.

At that time transiting Saturn made a significant conjunction to the national Virgo Midheaven, which is the peak point of the horoscope.

Critical time

For President Macapagal-Arroyo, at this time, Saturn's conjoining Philippine Sun in Gemini, in Seventh House of allies, indicates a critical time for any leader, since the Sun represents the top executive of the land. If the Seventh governs partners, spouses and political allies, it also makes for open enemies, and so President Macapagal-Arroyo is saddled with tremendous problems, such as the Opposition and their overt moves to destabilize her government and extremism. Although the Supreme Court has three times upheld her government's legitimacy, she is actually in a nightmarish situation governing a nation that has been amplified to the nines as split in the middle. The duality of being a Gemini (the Twins) country is exacerbated by the fact that we are at Zero Point in the new millennium when a radical cleansing period is required for mankind to undertake before entering a new Age of Light—an age of love, brotherhood and universal peace.

The requirements are of a high order. President Macapagal-Arroyo has what it takes to face the challenges, so it appears, based on her Moon Phase 14, which gives her mission orders. For one thing, she seems to flourish and glow in the midst of difficulties. Why?

"While seeming an image of softness and quiet, she draws perpetually upon glass with a diamond," writes the great modern poet Yeats about the entity born under Moon Phase 14. The exquisite image serves our purpose in communicating the contrasting gentle reserve and acute power, which coexist in this lunar phase. The native rarely appreciates the enormous impact of her personality upon others, so consumed is she in the constant activity of discovering herself in her every action. When she's in Moon 14, she faithfully follows her own law down to the smallest detail. While relatively cool and tranquil in manner, she leaves an indelible impression upon the world from having mobilized all her energies behind each successive act of self. This leadership quality of President Macapagal-Arroyo was tested on May 1, when Malacañang was assaulted by a mob of pro-Estrada supporters, incited by some opposition candidates.

Cool lady

They were proved wrong. For the little lady didn't lose her cool. Quickly, she took all the controls at her command and called the Armed Forces to assist her state police to subdue the mob at the gates without firing on it. Moon Phase 14 combined with the Sun and Mars signifies a solar force that has no aim other than practical expedience: to complete any project as simply and swiftly as possible.

While in-phase with the Moon, President Macapagal-Arroyo will lead a charmed life (meaning, nothing can harm her) since she has no concern for self-gain but has concern for others. She appears to want nothing, in contrast with her predecessor who wanted everything for himself and his extended families—mansions, billions in the banks, etc.

Triad

President Macapagal-Arroyo belongs to the triad of Leo, which is at her best in action, rather than in talk. Her Sun on 14 Aries says, "Among the masses success awaits her," as she truly feels she is here for the purpose of resolving the formidable problem of poverty, which would terrify her if she were out-of-phase with her Moon phase14, under the present circumstances.

She actually needs all the help and prayers she can get, and she knows it. Zero Point between two astrological ages is certainly not a time for picnic, and "Ate Glo" as she wants the poor people to call her, knows it, and may even be terrified in her private moments at the enormous demands seemingly placed upon her by circumstances.

The miracle of the new Age of Aquarius is found in its tendency to give us the reverse of what we wish for. President Macapagal-Arroyo may wish she were taller, as most people would probably wish their top executive to be. But if we go for big things, the universe will teach us profound ways of seeing things we haven't understood before.

For example, we can now understand that small is beautiful. Through pain and suffering we can now understand that less is more, and that the more one has forgotten about oneself, the less distorted will be one's the vision.

Moreover, the universe is now teaching us to look into the inner recesses of our soul through prayer and meditation, and feel the indwelling God. It's part of the paradigm shift. Our brains are being retooled now to match the coming higher voltage of energy that Aquarius brings. Small is power-packed just like the size of the atom. Look at the way mobile phones are shrinking in size. Or if you are poetic, have you tried seeing the universe in a little flower?

How to reconcile the opposing camps of one crying for strict justice and the other crying for compassion on a disgraced leader, is President Macapagal-Arroyo's formidable challenge. But she can leave this issue to the courts and attend to more urgent ones.

How she can succeed in bringing about peace and unity in the islands will determine the outcome of her presidency and this nation's ascendancy in the community of peace-loving and democratic nations. Working toward the golden Aquarian one-brotherhood-of-men concept may take much more time than one expects.

Right now, everybody is still going through a difficult process of making sense of what's happening within and around us.

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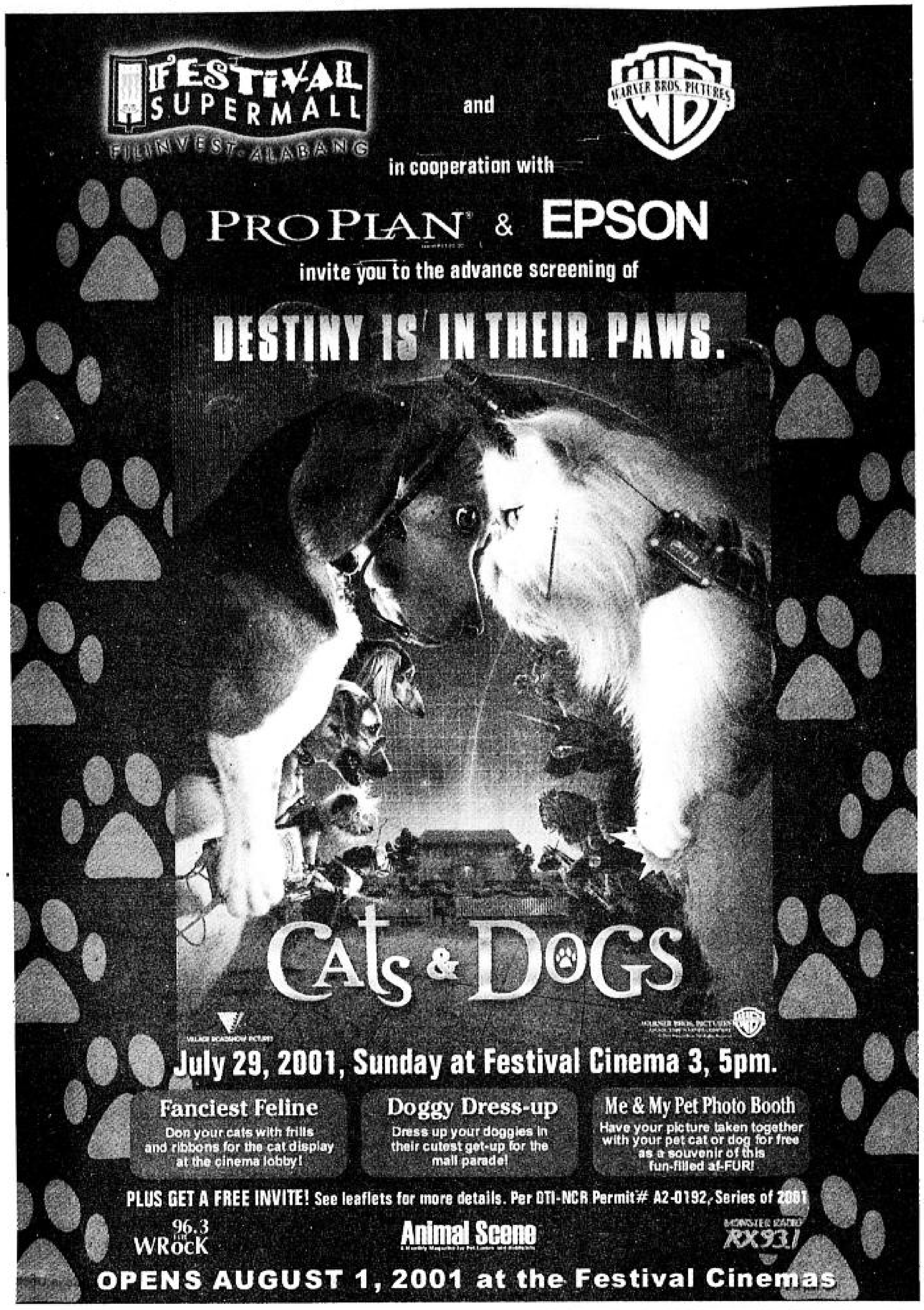
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Intramuros series features 'Batibot' characters

THE INTRAMUROS Evenings Performing Arts Series presents the well-loved characters of "Batibot," 6:30 p.m. tomorrow at the Teatrillo, Plaza San Luis Complex, corner Gen. Luna and Real Streets, Intramuros. Admission is free. Call 527-2961 or 527-3138.

GOINGS-ON

ANIMAL SHOW. A cat and dog show, "An A-fur with Cats and Dogs," will be held 1-4 p.m., July 29, 4/L, Cinema Court, Festival Supermall in Filinvest Alabang. The show coincides with the advance screening of Warner Brothers' "Cats and Dogs." It is open to all cat and dog owners. However, only one pet per handler is allowed. Pets must be vaccinated before the activity. Registration is now ongoing. Call 850-3517, local 266, 256 or 212.

SALE. Discounts of up to 70 percent will be given on TMX watches until Aug.15. Just visit any Timex Kiosks, Timex Shops, Watch n' See Stores and other participating outlets in Metro Manila and the provinces.

EDUCATORS CONFERENCE. The Reading Association of the Philippines invites all teachers, especially reading educators and literacy advocates, to an echo-conference dubbed "For the Love of Readings." The conference will be held 8 a.m.-3 p.m. tomorrow, at the Walter Hogan Conference Hall, ISO Complex, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights Campus. Selected talks and demo lessons presented at the International Reading Association convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA on April 29-May 4 will be featured. Call 823-5077 or 426-6001, local 7154.

CONFERENCE. The Philippine Librarians Association Inc. 2001 Board of Trustees will hold the PLAI National Conference on Aug 6-8 at the Cebu Grand Hotel, Cebu City. Theme of the conference is "PLAI 2001 and Beyond: Strengthening Partnerships and Linkages." Call 527-9071 to 74, local 44; 872-2729, 735-6011, local 564/5135, 526-8295, or 254-1130.

SEMINAR. A one-day seminar on crystals will be conducted by Frances Gloria, a certified hypnotherapist and crystal counselor, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. tomorrow, at the Inner Mind Development Institute, Room 308 Prince Plaza Building I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City. Call 892-6806, 810-7245 and 815-9890.

HEALING REVIVAL. Healing services are being offered at the Lord Jesus Christ Miracle Center, 6 Kamuning Road corner Luis Siangho St., Kamuning, QC. Healing revival starts on July 29. Call 415-0674 or 921-0584.

CARVING WORKSHOP. ProActive Center for Training (PACT) offers a carving workshop on Aug. 3, 1-5 p.m. at Encore! Encore!, 2/L Building A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City. Call 823-4947.

WRITING SEMINAR. Aspiring writers and children's book lovers are invited to a free seminar by children's book author Neni Sta. Romana-Cruz at Powerbooks on Arnaiz Street, Makati City at 3 p.m. tomorrow. Topics include techniques on writing children's books and tips on how to get published. Call 844-4455.

PROMO. Cherry Foodarama on Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City, launched its 2001-2002 raffle-promo. A brand-new Kia Rio 1.3 Notchback, plus Kolin home appliances—29-inch color TV, window airconditioner, microwave oven, rice cooker, electric fans and a flat iron — will be raffled off at Cherry's branches on Shaw Boulevard and Congressional Avenue, QC. Grand draw is on Feb. 14, 2002.

WORKSHOP. Tower Book House, with the Women in Assistance, a service-oriented group for women, is offering a workshop for working women, aged 25 and above. Dubbed "Comfort and Joy," the workshop is designed to help women redefine themselves by seeking solutions/alternatives to their various concerns. Different modules for each session covering travel and leisure, social equanimity, economic independence and spiritual comfort have been prepared. The course includes a field trip and interactive sessions. The workshop starts this August at the Windsor Tower, 163 Legaspi St., Legaspi Village, Makati City. Call 815-6925/4938.

PLAY. Catch one of this year's nominees for the Aliw awards for theater in a special weekend run at the Abelardo Hall Auditorium, College of Music, UP Diliman. "Bilog," Dulaang Talyer's multimedia production, will be shown 3 and 7 p.m., July 28 and 29. Call 415-6786 or 925-1933.

WORSHIP SEMINAR. Rojo, keyboard player and vocalist of a leading Irish Christian band, will conduct a worship seminar Aug. 1-3 at the Lay Force Center of the San Carlos Seminary in Guadalupe, Makati City. Call 637-4998/6680.

Family fun fair in Libis

THINK of a place where parents get to talk with their children, where siblings get to share petty secrets and where the whole family dines out together as if every day is family day. Think of a technology-driven yet family-oriented urban address that offers a distinct lifestyle where work and leisure are centered on family values.

To herald this unique family concept, Eastwood Property Holdings Inc. is putting together an activity-laden, fun-filled weekend dubbed as "Family Fun Fair @ Eastwood City Walk" in Eastwood City, Libis. The event will be held at the Eastwood City Walk Water Plaza on July 28 and 29, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. The whole family gets to participate in an array of games, kiddie shows, magic tricks and interesting activities set amid the neo-urban landscape of Eastwood City Walk.

The two-day fun fair kicks off with a video show and coloring sessions for children in the morning followed by hilarious antics from the host clown. Afterward, young and old alike can showcase their creative side as the face and ceramic painting sessions follow. While families take their lunch, mime artists, puppeteers and clowns will be restaurant-hopping along the City Walk row.

In the afternoon, a caricature artist will be around to treat guests to his comic creations. Hyperactive tykes can take part in the Scavenger Hunt and other fun games.

During breaks, participants can have their favorite food and refreshments from the different restaurants now open at Eastwood City Walk—Macau, Fazoli's, McDonald's, Tokyo Tokyo, Subway, Mongolian Feast and Seattle's Best Coffee. Also open are Deli France, Mystic Grill, West Lake and Blue Onion. Family members can eat inside these trendy dining spots or enjoy a drink al fresco. Teens can take a leisurely stroll along the pedestrian-friendly City Walk or enjoy a panoramic view of Eastwood City from the viewing tower.

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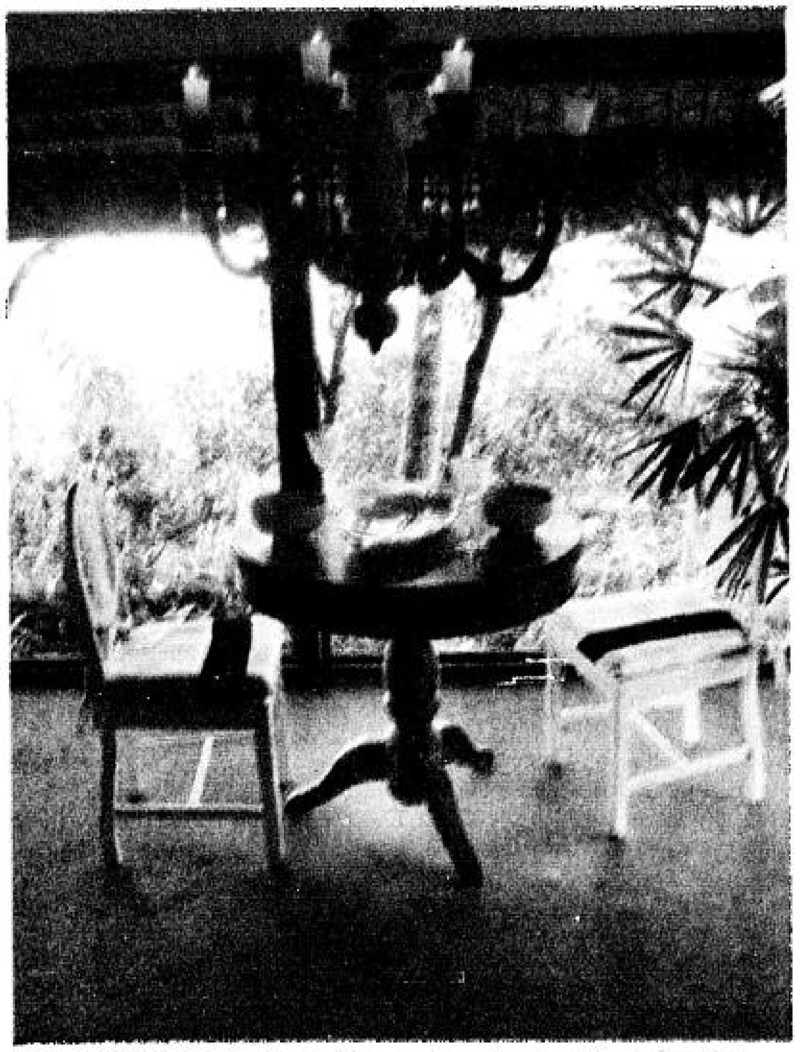
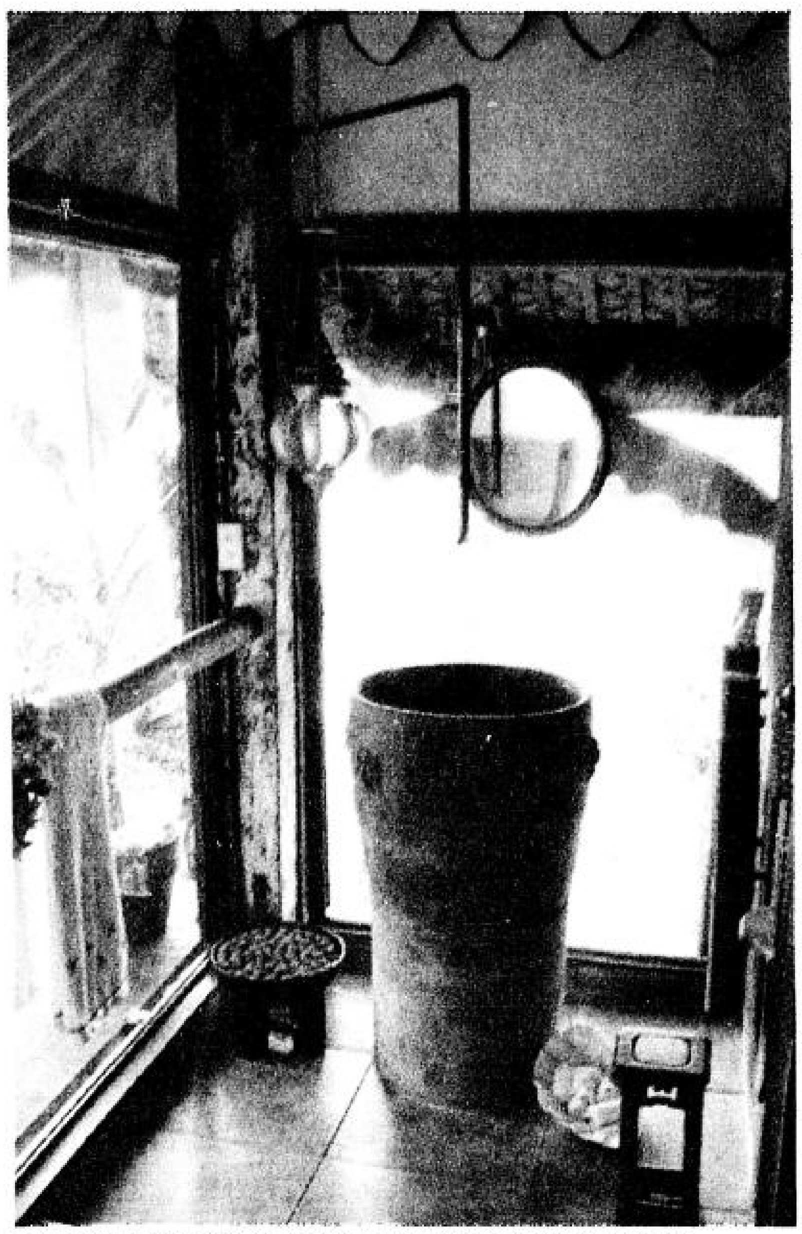


THE VERANDAH is shaded by *anahaw* leaves with a Spanish wooden chandelier as decor. Enjoy breakfast in the *narra* table with bone and shell inlay.

GLASS bowl doubles as a sink atop glass ledge.

Thatched 'anahaw' roof, Vigan tiles and bathroom nearly exposed to the watchful eyes of nature. It's resort living in a chilly ridge

Amanpulo in Tagaytay



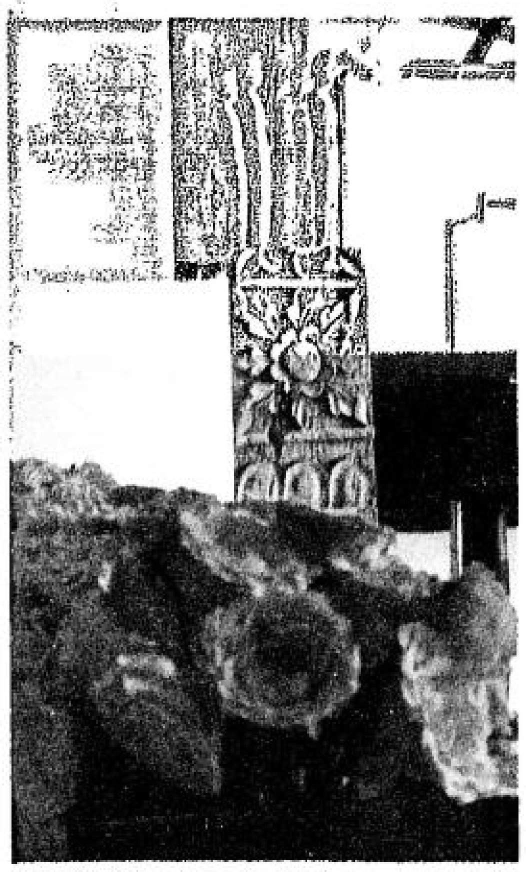
NO walls bathroom. This tropical look is characterized by exposed pipes, a bamboo towel rod and Ifugao accessories,

(From page C3)

Nine-year-old son Fargo provided inputs for his playroom by the driveway. The separate structure also has a loft inspired by houses in the Mountain Province. Again, Georgie combined modern elements such as white tiles and bathroom fixtures with native materials like *anahaw*, bamboo and old wood.

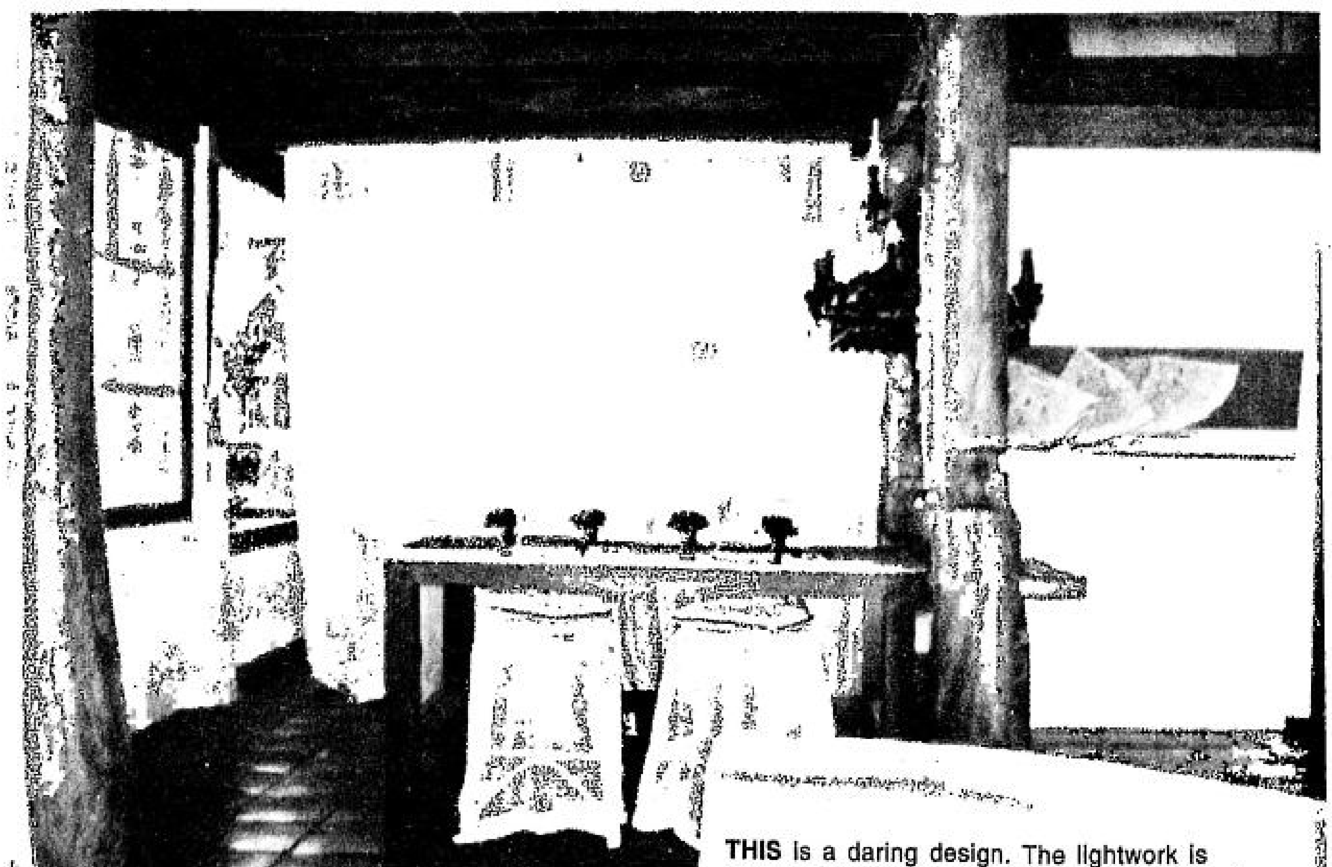
Georgie, incidentally, has no green thumb, but sister Ruby, a plant lover, encouraged her to persevere. Thanks to organic fertilizers and a little help from the gardener, Georgie can now grow decorative and flowering plants with little difficulty. She has even discovered the virtues of zero-waste management by composting. A weekend home, to be conducive to romance, has to be environment-friendly as well.

E-mail the author at enigma0203@yahoo.com



BALINESE column is used as a pedestal for icons.

TENT LIVING. White canopy conceals satellite bedroom's *anahaw* ceiling yet the floor joists, beams and columns are exposed. Black and white are still the dominant colors. Ramon Diaz's version of marine life hangs by the bed.



THIS is a daring design. The lightwork is asymmetrically located by the large slab of post. The other side is the ledge for a dining set-up. Gauze is used as a divider for skirting and stool covers.

ORIENTAL powder room with Middle Eastern look

Beautyspeak at Propaganda

By Marge C. Enriquez
Photos by Chito Vecina
PICTORIAL DIRECTION BY ALBERT AVELLANA

PROPAGANDA's new salon at the second level of Greenbelt Mall looks as if it has been inspired by the home shows on Lifestyle Network. A combination of loft living, boudoir, country and shabby chic, the ambience evokes the feeling of being in a home right in the middle of the central business district.

The space was once the lobby of the Greenbelt movie house. Since the tenants couldn't knock down the space, they decided to expose the innards such as the gut, beams and water sprinklers in the fire system. The walls were whitewashed and the flooring was plastered and sanded for that chipped-off look.

Homey

Marlon Rivera, one of Propaganda's partners who works as a production designer and creative director, conceived the homey ambience. He took after the Manhattan lofts that were rarely touched and furnished with old items. Moldings and cornices blend with the industrial design. The mirrors are framed with molded latex in Sirocco patterns. Tables are adorned with urns. Garden sconces from SM and botanical prints line the walls. An old chandelier adds a humorous touch. Salon supplies are stored in antique medicine cabinets. *Toile* awnings cover the airconditioners. Light filters through the striped curtains, made from shirting material. The picture windows offer a view of the *kalachuchi* trees and Legaspi Village.

This was a contrast to its former stark, minimalist interiors at Rustan's. The space was narrow and the furniture lines were rigid. The décor had a psychological effect in that everybody felt stiff and quiet. Unlike the new salon, the atmosphere is relaxed and kids even run around the place.

Propaganda started out with Alex Carbonell, Sebastian's stylist, whose clients were Rivera, Juan Sarte III, Jay Lozada, Jing Monis and Cristina Duque. Aside from being in the advertising industry, Rivera did makeup for Estée Lauder. Between casting, Sarte would observe makeup artists and eventually mastered the craft. Lozada trained with Guerlain and Clinique. Duque came from Chanel. Monis is also a hairdresser. The friends had wanted a salon of their own which combined their strength in makeup and hairstyle. Propaganda is a pun on propagating *ganda* or beauty.

PROPAGANDA interiors is a mix of boudoir, loft and shabby chic

Each has a different responsibility. Carbonell handles the daily operations; Rivera, the marketing; Lozada, product development; Sarte, the aesthetics; Monis, human relations; and Duque, being a woman, naturally, holds the purse strings.

"We work like different body parts, but each is very essential," says Carbonell.

Pampering

They all had to make the transition from friends to business partners and from creative artists to managers. They laid everything on the table, from quirks to perks.

"The hardest thing is if the artists are not business-minded," says Carbonell. They have to keep an eye on purchases and inventory. Even the allotment of shampoo and conditioner could make great savings or loss. While other salons will scrimp on shampoos, Propaganda likes to pamper their customers. This is why they keep coming back.

Ever since they started in Rustan's Makati, business had always been brisk. The salon handled 70 clients a day. The store planned an expansion. It needed space for the men's boutique. Propaganda was offered another space in the store but the team found it too small.

They found luck at Greenbelt. Carbonell and Monis are full-time hairdressers. Like most salons, it's best to make an appointment instead of walking in.

Makeup is one of its specialties. The makeup service is priced at P2,500, and clients are lapping it up. The price covers skin analysis and preparation, not just coloring the face.

Carbonell says even if the artists were given one theme, each of them would interpret it differently. For instance, if you want a soft and glowing face, Rivera will use purple and pink. Carbonell prefers beige and pink. Duque goes for Chanel amber. Sarte is famous for his no-makeup look, which actually takes a lot of work. Lozada is known for Hollywood glam. Monis knows how to light up the face.

The market for makeup service ranges from weddings—for brides and guests—to proms and debuts. Teenagers actually dream of having their faces done by a Propaganda artist.

With only 13 chairs, the salon can accommodate as much as 80 patrons a day. "If you're trained well, you can be fast and correct," says Carbonell.

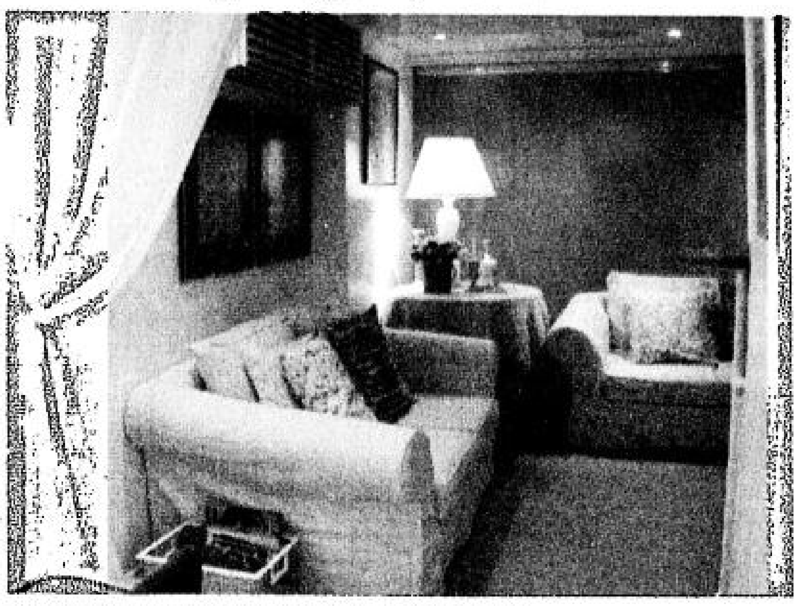
But the new space is just an appetizer. Propaganda is working on a full-size salon on the top floor of Greenbelt. It will be lavishly decorated and will hold 40 seats. Despite such salons as Piandre, Monica, Hairbytes, Cutting Crew, Salon de Manila and Basement—which maintain high standards—Propaganda has its loyal clientele.

"It's all *hiyang-hiyang*," says Rivera. "You can't claim superiority over others. Our clients just followed us."

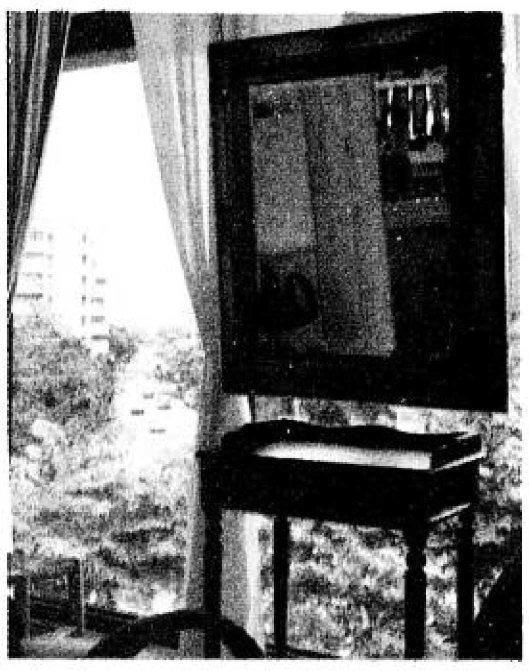
Propaganda's advantage is that since the artists come from fashion and advertising, they know the right service to give. Models come for their preparatory work such as hair coloring before they go under the kleig lights. The artists would prescribe the right colors, which would be enhanced under different lighting conditions.

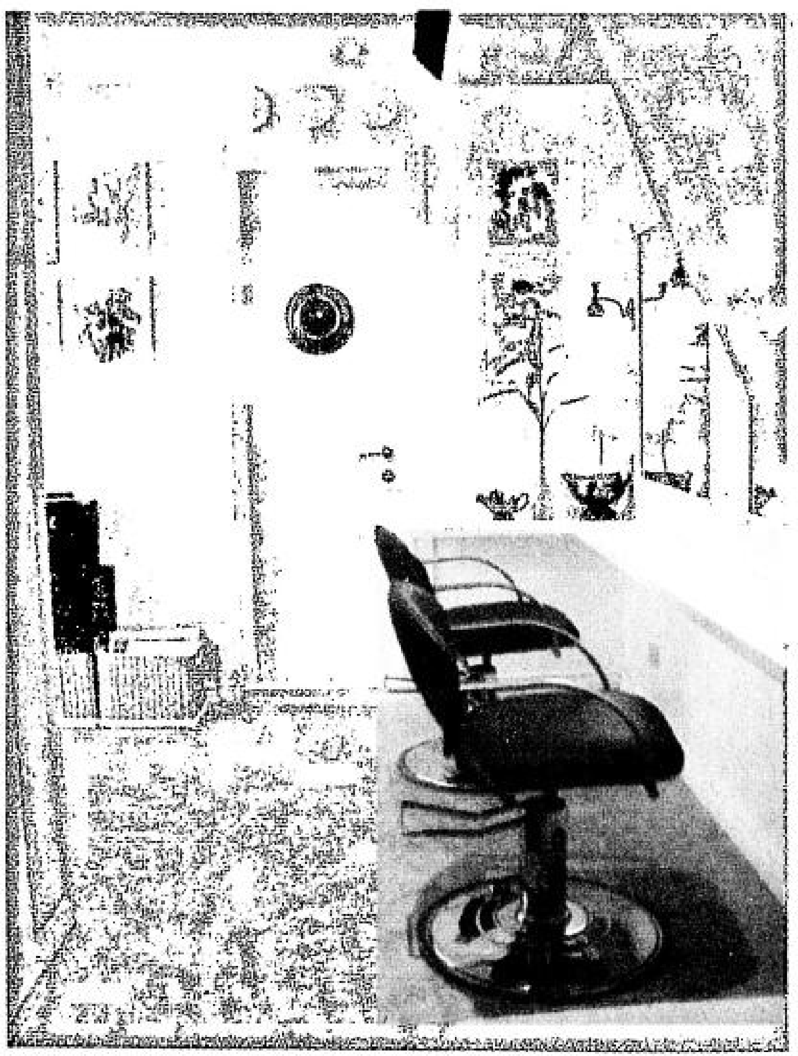
But in the long run, the artists want to prove that the Filipino talents have got solid technique under their belts.

Propaganda is located at Unit 303, 3/L, Greenbelt Mall, tel. 893-4098.


CLIENTS are literally made to feel at home.

The hot salon has acquired a bigger, grander space at Greenbelt where pulchritude rules


MOLDED mirror frames and copies of period tables


BOTANICAL prints, baskets and second-hand finds give the salon a lived-in look.

You too can look hip

U2 has unveiled its latest collections both for men and women.

The women's collection offers clothes to suit people of all ages, from youngsters to semi-professionals. U2 Men also has a long list of fashion picks starting with the U2 urban look.

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The knitwear queen revives the Japanese aesthetic of the '80s by emphasizing fabric and the space between it and the body

THE LOOSE silhouette fits the mature and sophisticated woman.

Tan-Gan's big look

By Marge C. Enriquez
Photos By Raymond Lauchengco

IN THE '80S, the Japanese designers redefined the periphery of fashion away from the Western ideals of the body, such as the hourglass figure, and the philosophy that clothes are made to frame the body. In Western dress, the material is cut to the body, contoured and modeled after it. In so doing, there's no space between the body and garment. In Japanese design, the space between the body and the fabric is emphasized.

Knitwear designer Lulu Tan-Gan revives that aesthetic. Women with fleshy arms and wide waistlines should rejoice. The big look, particularly the blouson, is back.

Tan-Gan notes the difference between the millennium interpretation and the "biggie" of the '80s. "Their big look stuck to a solid color. Now there's more layering. There's a chemise or a tube worn under it. The materials are sheerer materials. I'm more adventurous in color. They are brighter and lighter."

Bestsellers

Asked the conventional question how business is doing in the SM outlets, Tan-Gan replies that business depends on new items on the rack. One of the recent bestsellers is the drop-stitch blouson. "It's for the sophisticated and the advanced in fashion. It attracts bigger women because of the size. I have colors which are like watercolors."

A survivor in the competitive RTW field, Tan-Gan says business survives if the merchandise stands out from the uniformity of things.

Right now, local designers are facing their toughest competitors—foreign labels (or their knockoffs) sold in *tiangges*. "They are all the same and low-priced, but when the market becomes saturated even the household help ends up wearing those clothes. You lose the value of product. There's too much supply versus demand.

TAN/p.D4

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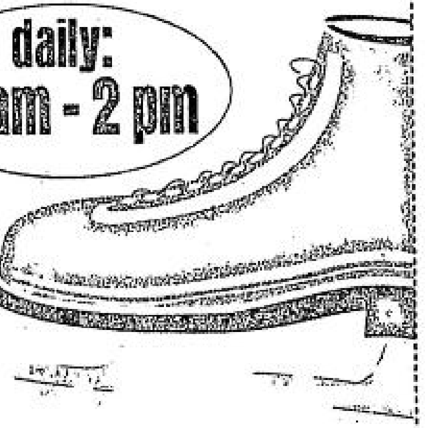

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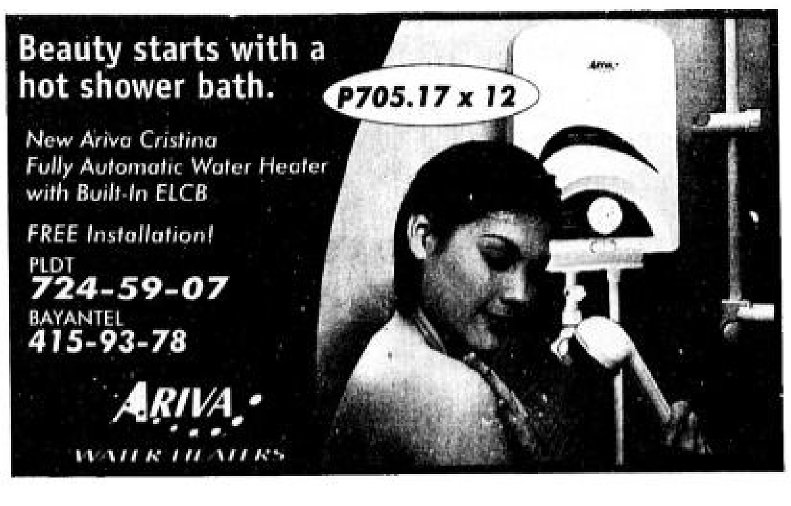

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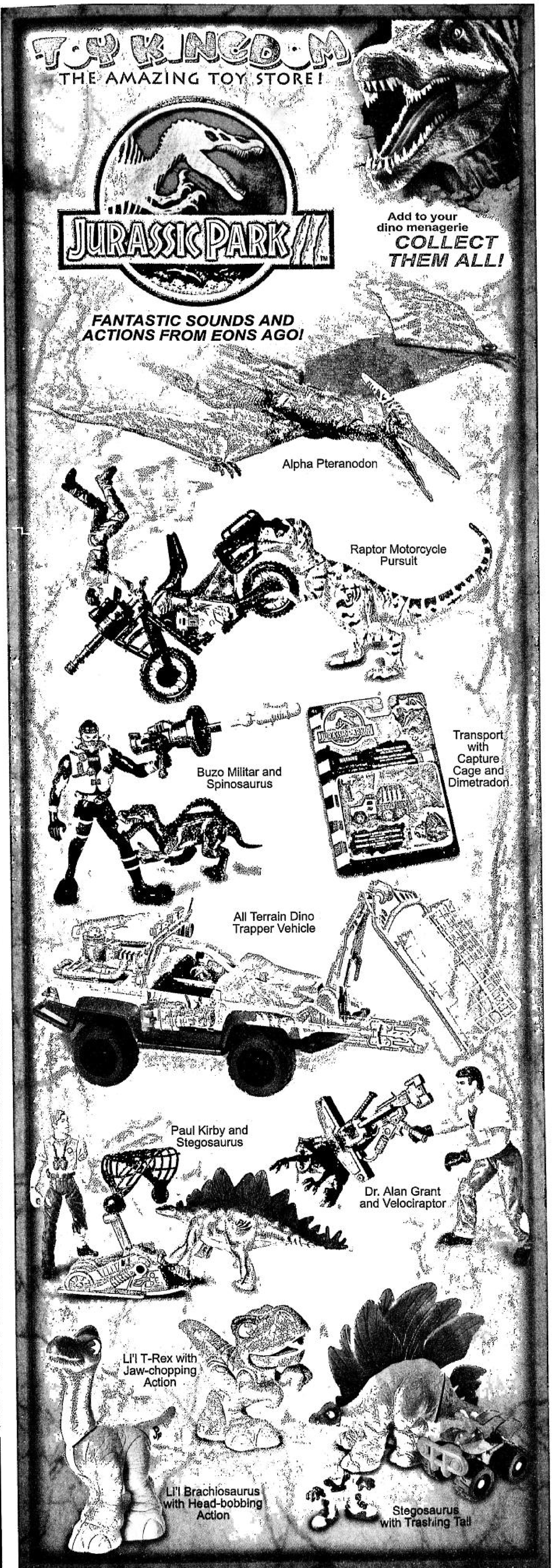
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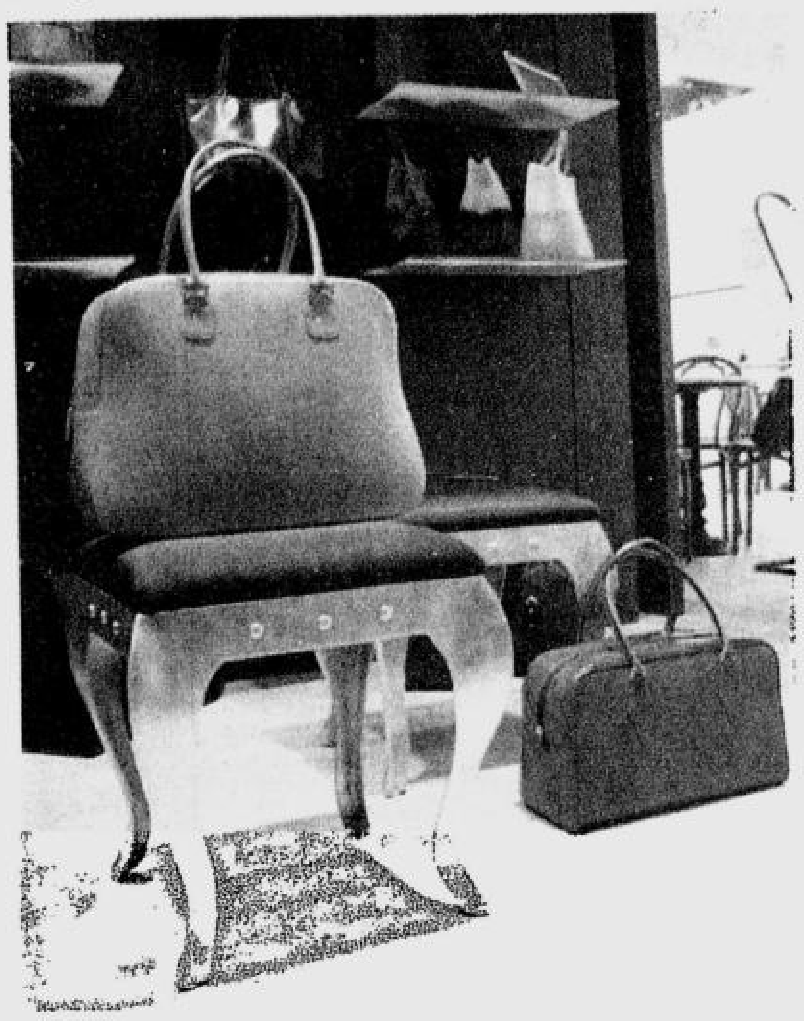
From makeup chap to bag man

The man behind the defunct Central Maquillage goes on another Voyage

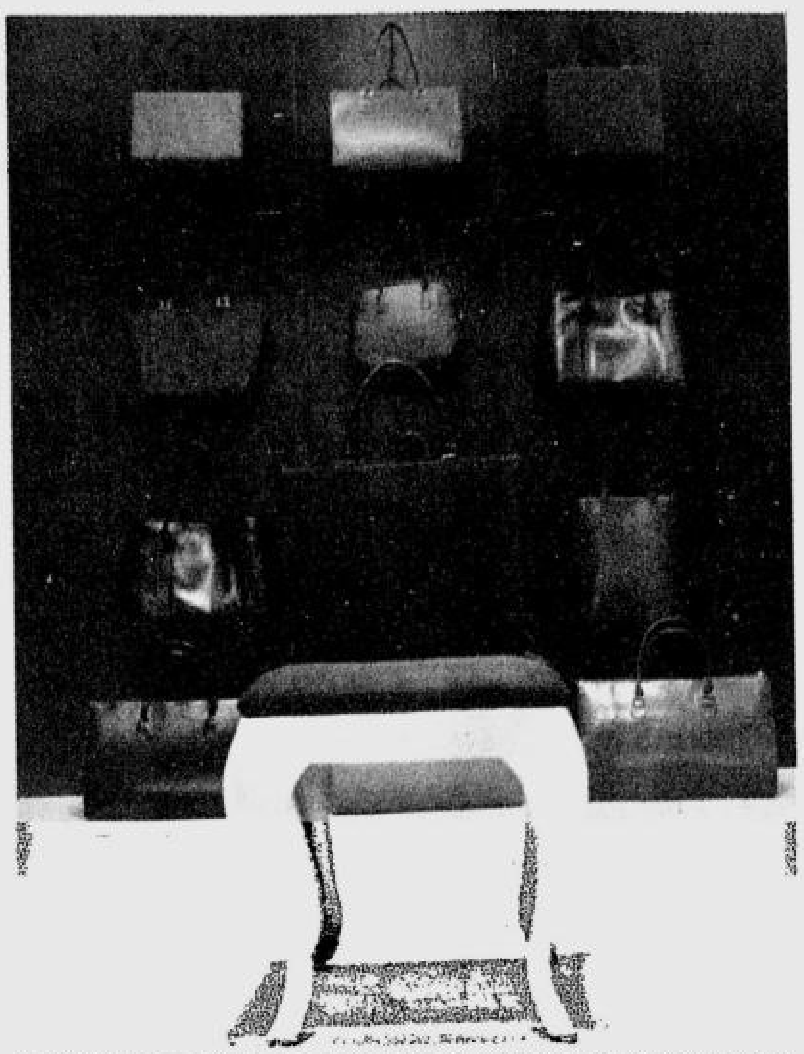
PHOTOS BY CHITO VECINA
PICTORIAL DIRECTION BY ALBERT AVELLANA

THERE'S an adage that for every ending, there's a new beginning. That's precisely what happened to businessman and eligible bachelor Raul Francisco. On the one hand, Central Maquillage had closed shop since his business was vulnerable to the fluctuating dollar exchange rate, the economic downturn, the sluggish retail scene and low consumer confidence. On the other, the bag store Twist in Glorietta, which he runs with partner Cristina Tuason, has been quite successful that another branch will open at Shangri-La Plaza. Lately his spirits have been buoyed by the success of Voyage in Rockwell's Power Plant. The store specializes in bigger bags.

In the past six years, Central Maquillage shared new ideas about cosmetics and trendy colors. The store had a corner that sold small bags and cosmetic kits. Customers were fascinated by the chic styles that were sold at affordable prices. That corner took off into a bag store called Twist.



POPULAR styles



VOYAGE goes niche marketing by specializing in utilitarian bags.

Invigorated

Francisco is invigorated by his new venture. He designs the bags and the customers have been lapping them up. Even if the bags are made in the Philippines and priced below P3,000, the A market has been patronizing them. This phenomenon bucked the belief that the elite crowd will only buy imported designer labels (or their knockoffs). Francisco says there's a growing market that appreciates quality and design value, and not necessarily with a global name attached to it. "The company's mission is to marry form with function; make classic shapes from new materials," he explains.

While Twist offers smaller and fashion-forward bags for the trendy client, Voyage's concept consists of utilitarian bags such as totes, men's and students' bags, carry-ons that are named after destinations. China is a tote with a magnetic snap; another version has a zipper for security closure. Frankfurt, the best seller, is a midsize travel bag with faux leather straps and an extra pocket. The Berkeley is an envelope and will soon come in industrial materials. Venice is a caramel bag with extra rivets. Newport is made of pebblegrain faux leather. Avignon is a nylon weekend tote. Hong Kong is a neoprene purse that can hold your passport and other travel documents.

The customers use the bags for weekends in Hong Kong and Punta Fuego. Francisco calls a large tote "Mom's bag" for mother to stuff diapers, bottles and other personal effects. Other customers want big bags so they can stuff in their smaller ones. Men can stuff their bags with MP3s and laptops.

Limited edition

The travel bags cost less than P3,000. Francisco uses high-quality imported faux leather, neoprene, jute and other industrial materials. He plans to get suppliers from the provinces so he can produce bags made from indigenous materials. The colors come in basic camel, tan, red, burgundy and black.

"The new color is texture," says Francisco. "You can have five styles in black, but the texture will be different."

All the bags are sold in extremely limited editions. "We are always changing, tweaking and turning things around," says Francisco. When customers come back, they won't find the same style again, perhaps a variation.

To make the bag sturdy, it is reinforced with extra padding, double-back stitching and piping.

Despite the success of Twist and Voyage, Francisco is not about to forget his expertise in cosmetics. "I look at it as part of total growth. It will still be there. My interest is in moving on. Who knows? I might do something again in cosmetics."

Marge C. Enriquez

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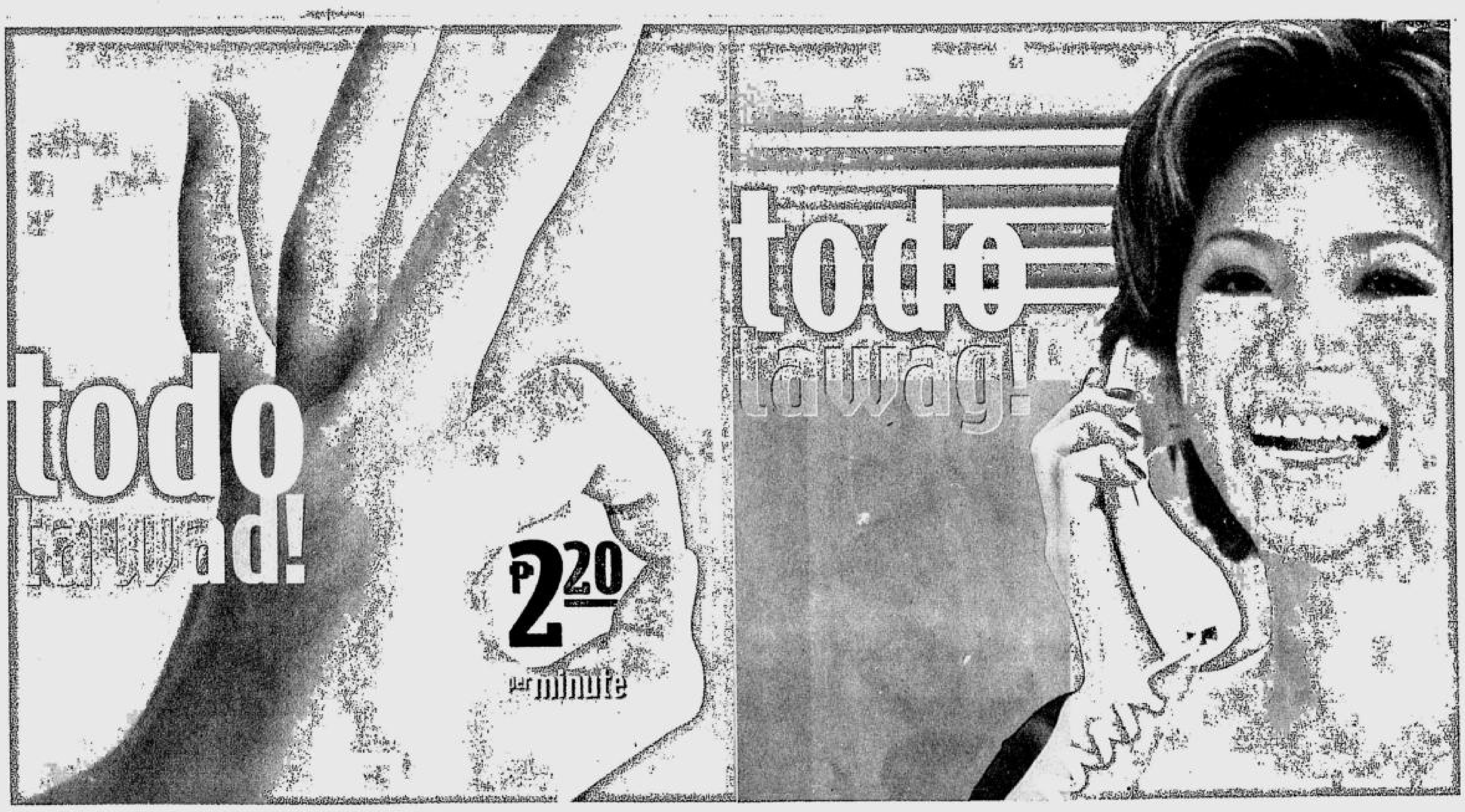

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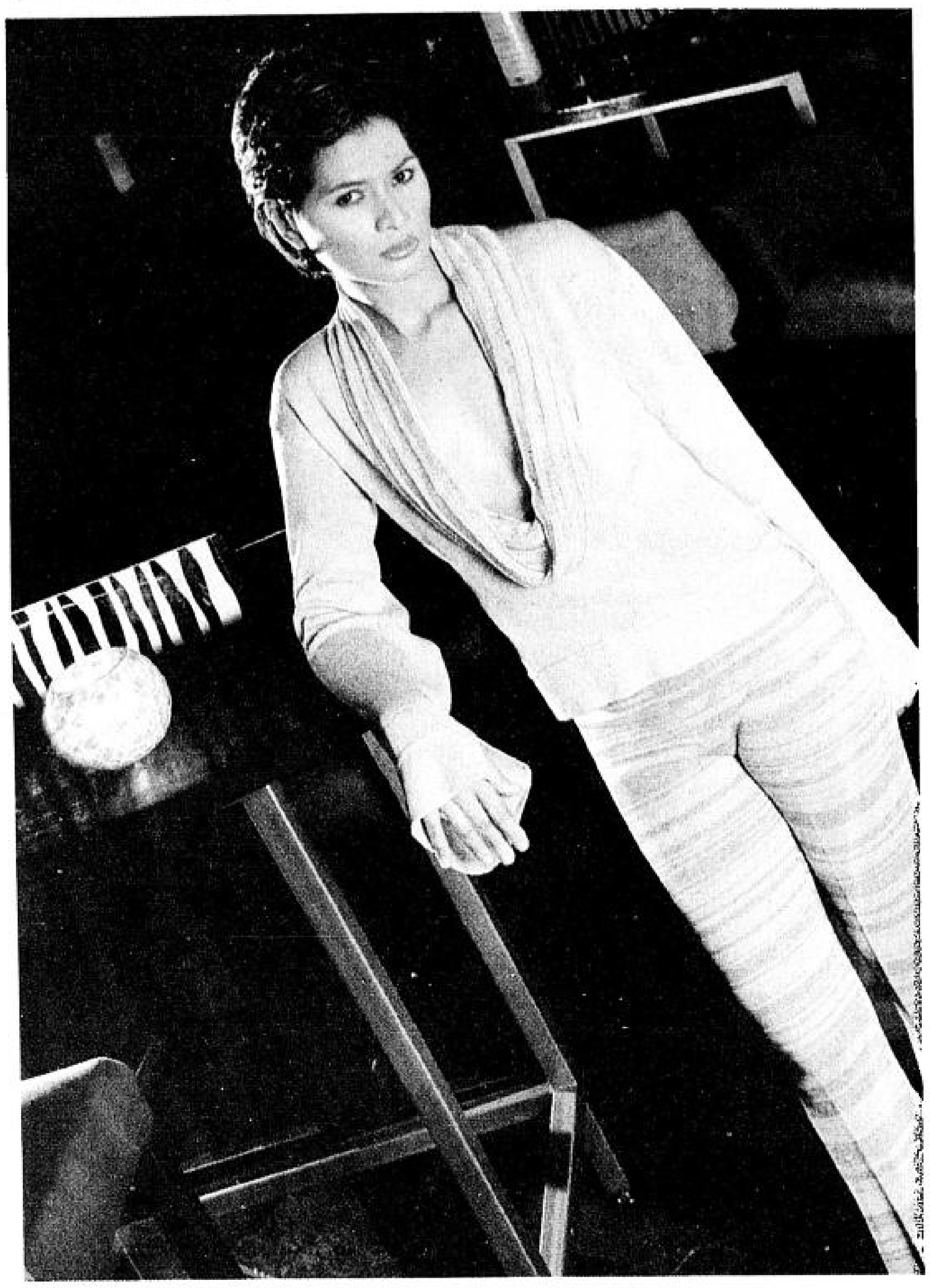


SUGGEST curves with this easy drop-stitch jersey knit top with bell sleeves and a cowl neckline, which goes with the striped retro pants.

Tan-Gan's big look

(From page D1)

Prices go down after some time, but it won't sell no matter how nice the material is," she says.

A typical Aquarian, Tan-Gan believes in going against the tide. "That's where product development is important. I'm starting the '80s trend quite early. Nobody is doing something blousy. Everything is body-fitting," she says.

Erratic

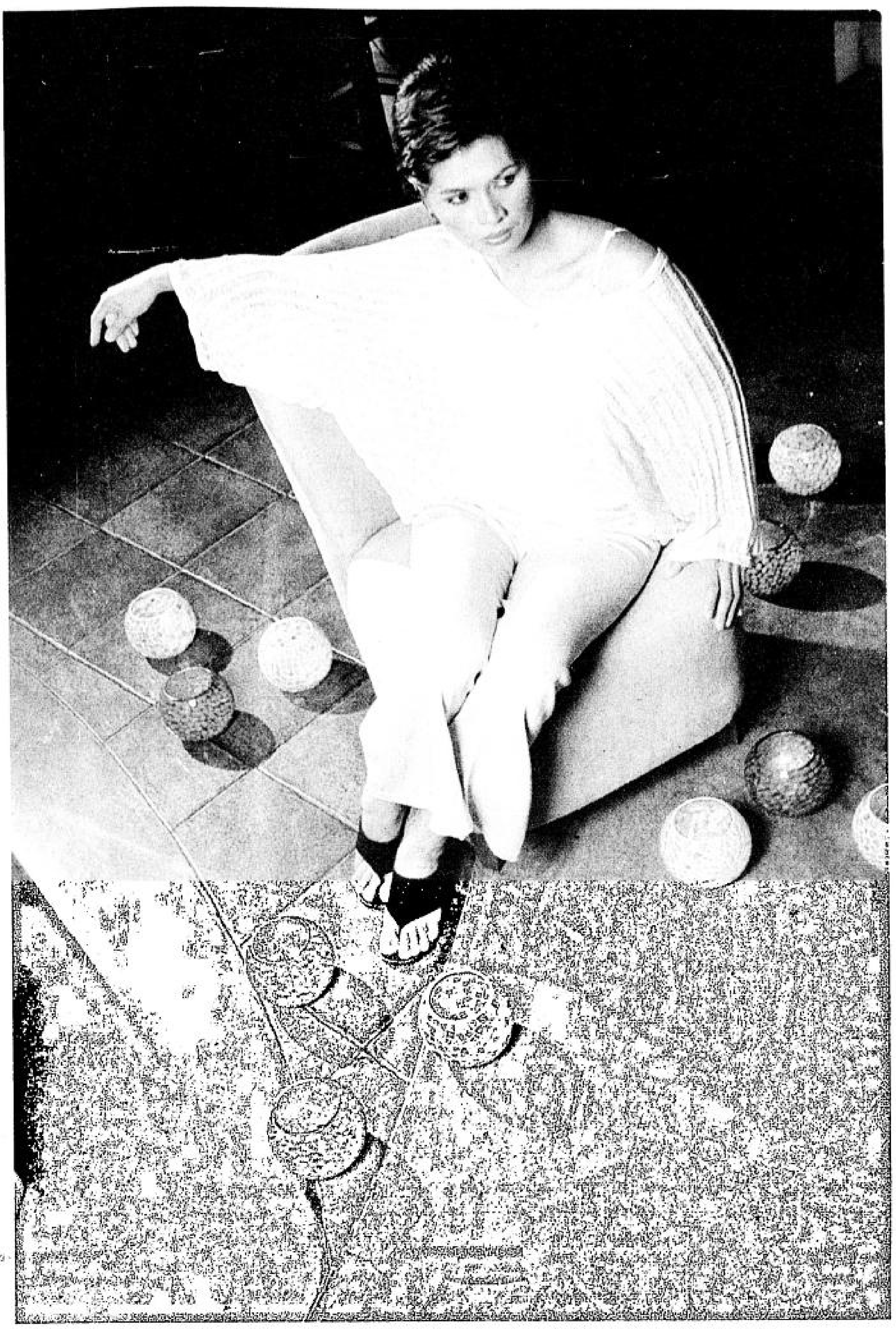
Tan-Gan maintains sleek lines, functional tops and basic bottoms since this year has been "erratic" for sophisticated fashion. "It's a smaller market—a mix of career and mature women. They go for twin sets. This year I've been working on a change of shades of reds, blues and beiges. Next season I'll replace red with a hot pink. It's quite dangerous to invest as it is not an easy color to sell. But it's bright and it perks up the store and story line."

This coming quarter, Tan-Gan will play on navy, prussian blue, yellow and cream. Toward the holiday, she'll use kiwi instead of Christmas green.

Tan-Gan says texture is the key element in fashion after the stark minimalism of the '90s. "The detailing is in the material," she says. This applies to her yarns and handloom knits.

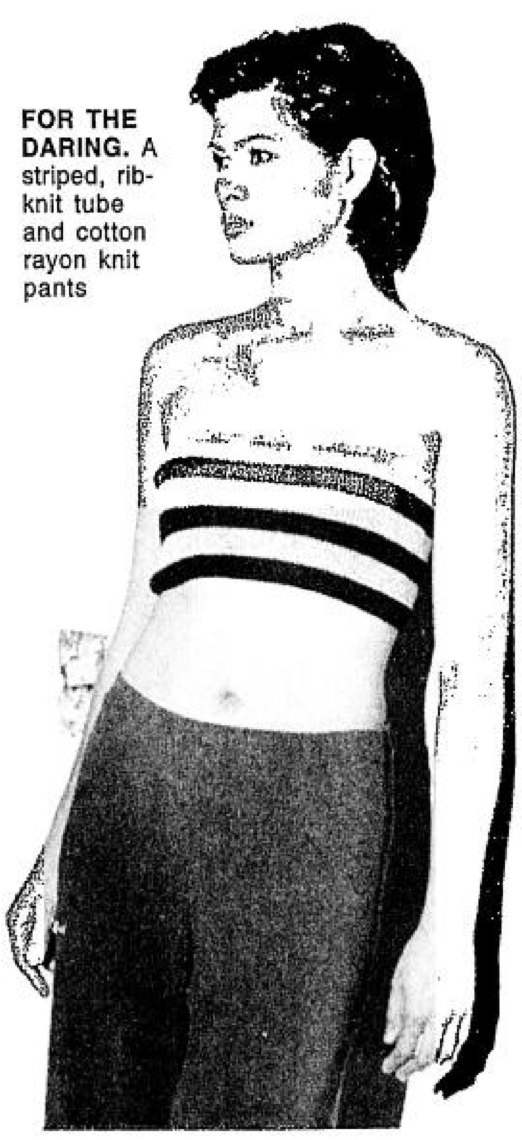
She will present more sheer knits, mesh and knit. For her collection made for the INQUIRER pictorial, Tan-Gan's knits were light; some resembled macramé. She gives the women the option to wear sexy underlayers such as a halter-top or a tube or go sophisticated with the blouson.

TEXTURE is the key fashion element. The sheer, batwing drop-stitch blouse, hides figure flaws. A halter underneath it keeps you modest.



BESTSELLER. Drop-stitch V-neck blouse layered over a ribbed jersey chemise and jersey pants

LAYERING. Cowl neck jersey knit halter is worn over the tube.



FOR THE DARING. A striped, rib-knit tube and cotton rayon knit pants

MODEL:
ERMA MAGLALANG

HAIR AND MAKEUP BY
TOTO AND JAIME RUBEN
FOR PATRICK ROSAS

LOCATION:
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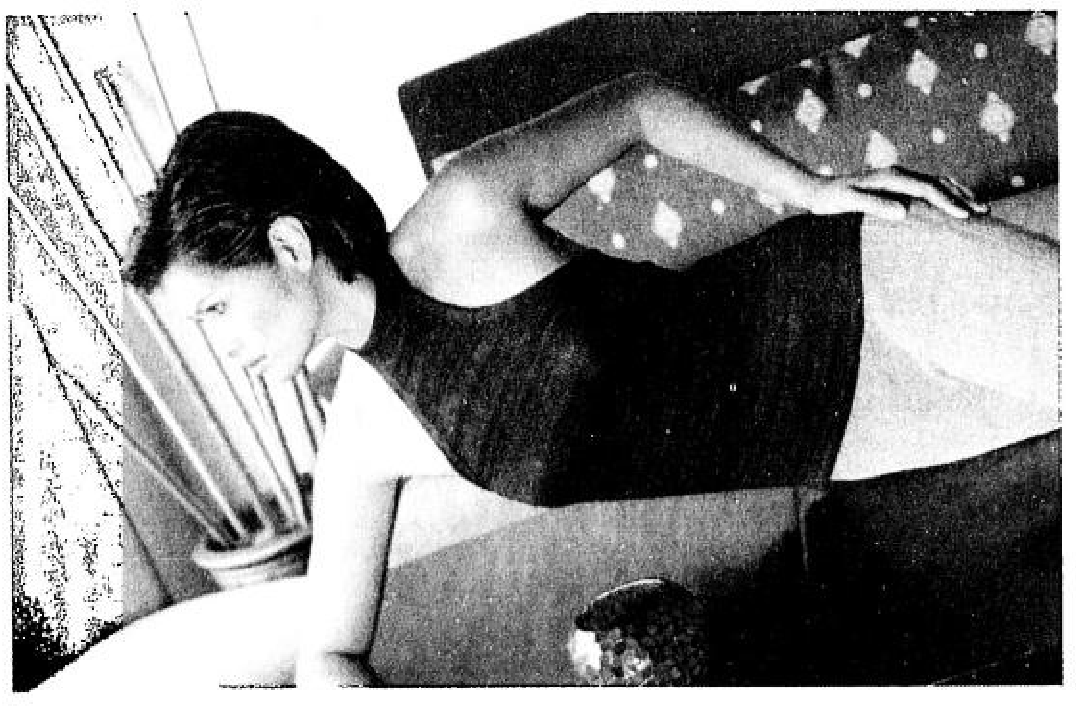
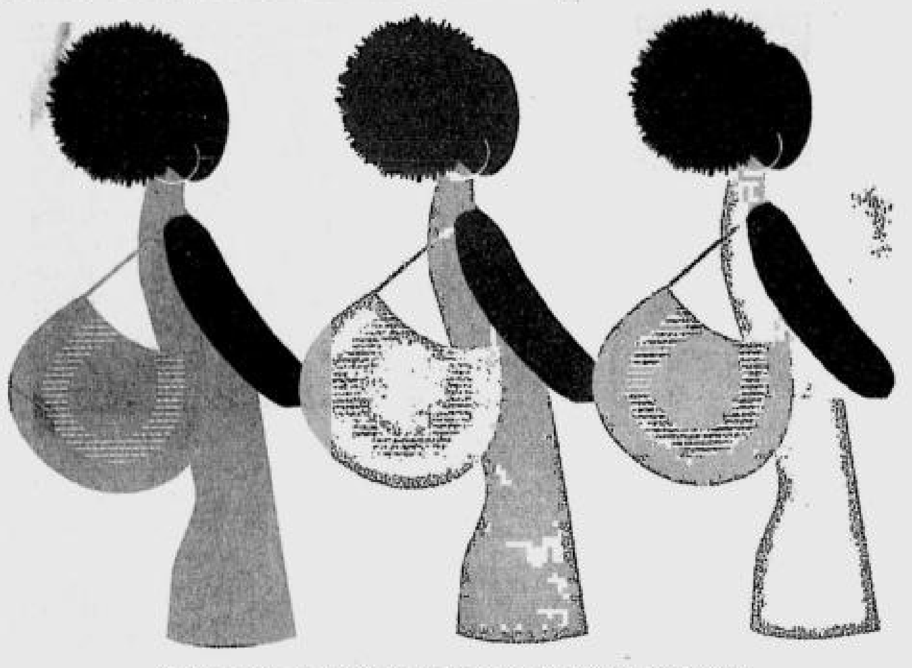
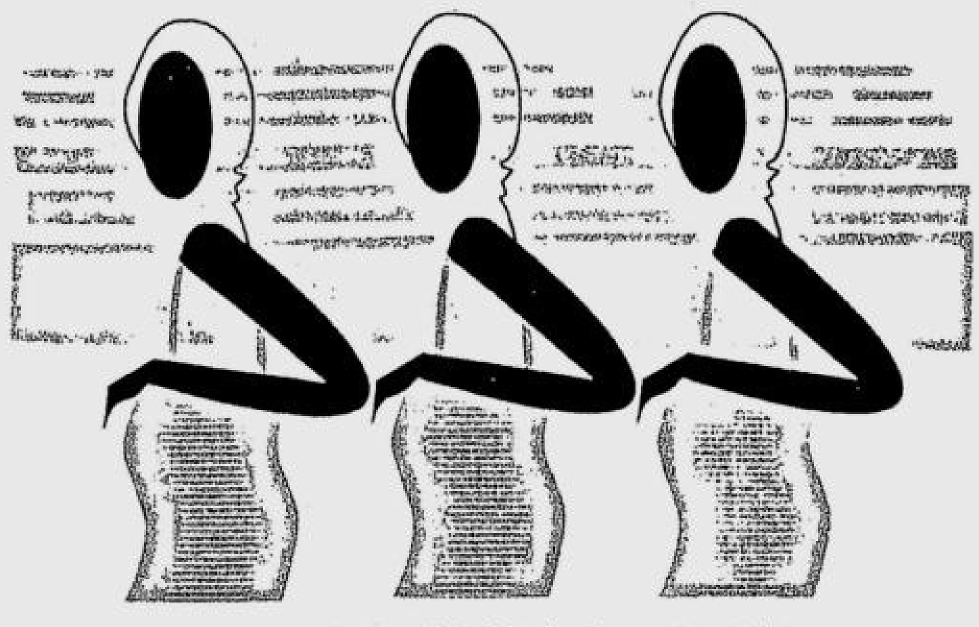


IF you've got it, flaunt it with the jersey halter and velour pants.


"CIRCLE" shoulder bag in suede with jute inserts

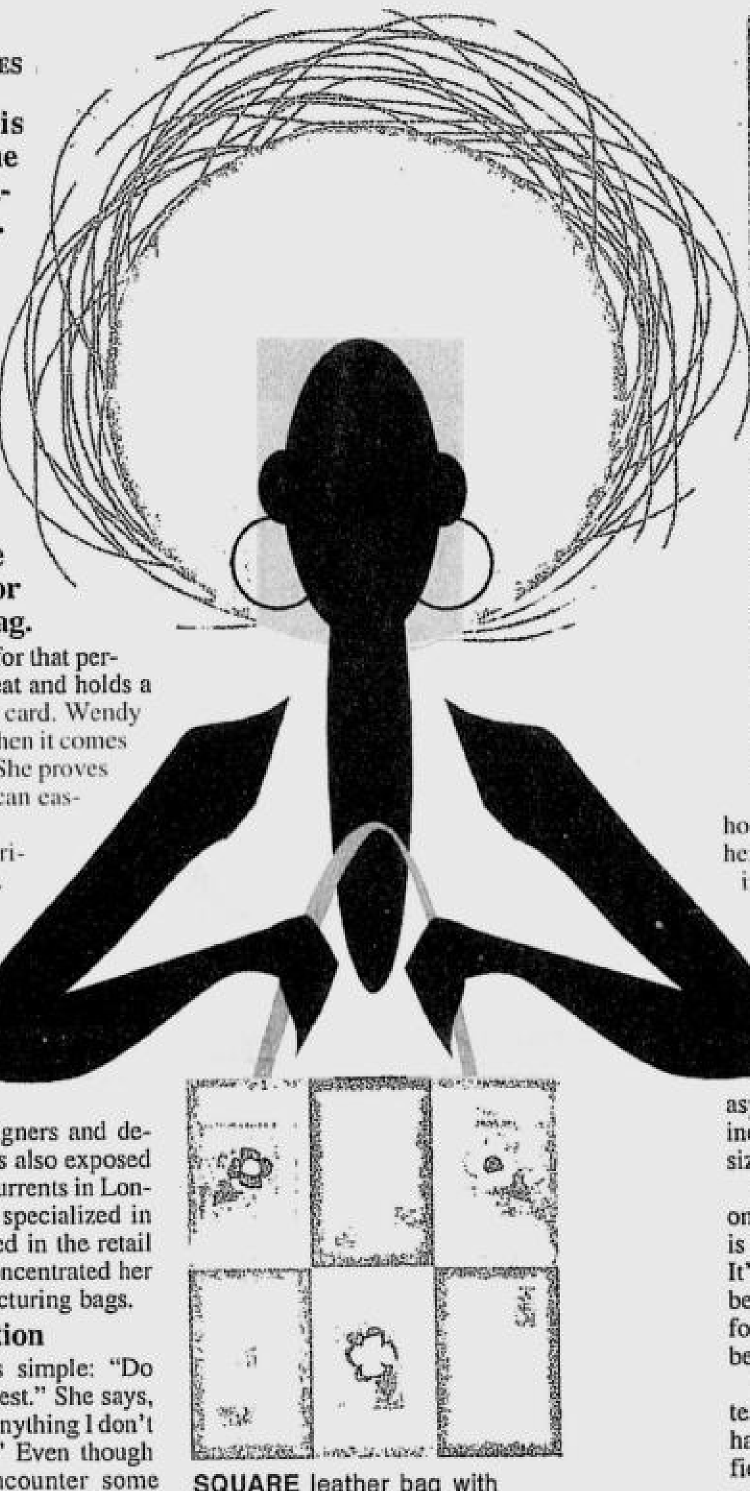

"WAVE" rectangular hand/shoulder bag in suede with jute

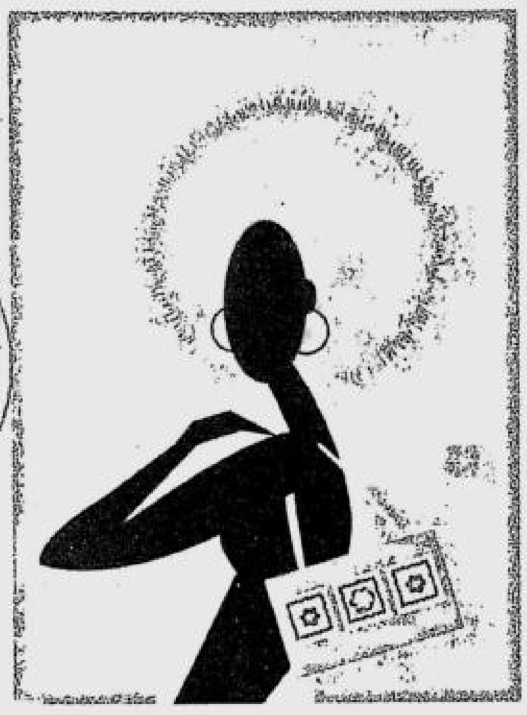
A new handle on the handbag

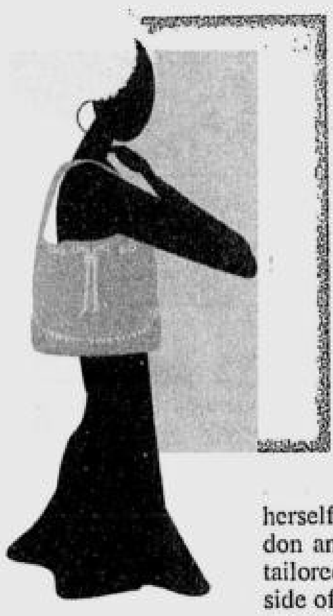
Wendy Maramba takes us on a whirlwind of inspirations with just one tote bag

By Margie T. Estrella
Illustrations by James Reyes

THE HANDBAG is probably one of the most important fashion accessories of a woman. Not only is a bag essential for carrying necessary items—wallet, cell phone, hairbrush, those blue oil-absorbing sheets—it also complements a woman's attire. In fact, a handbag may even be the focal point of an entire outfit. Now that accessories are the rage, there is less room for the functional-but-dowdy bag.


SQUARE leather bag with crochet flowers


RECTANGULAR leather bag with crochet flowers

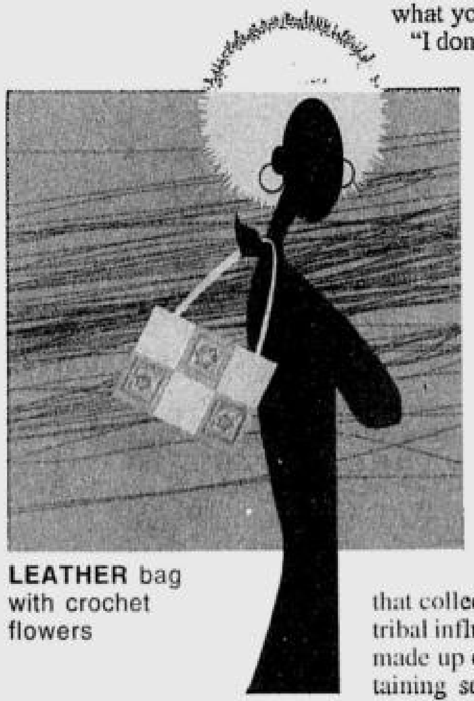

DUFFEL bag with teeth trim in fuchsia/berry

Everyone is looking for that perfect purse that looks great and holds a little more than a credit card. Wendy Maramba is an expert when it comes to designing handbags. She proves that form and function can easily go hand and hand.

Maramba has experience written all over her. Having graduated magna cum laude in fashion design from the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York, she has worked with some of the world's top designers and department stores. She has also exposed herself to the European fashion currents in London and Paris. Though she has specialized in tailored garments and has worked in the retail side of fashion, Maramba has concentrated her efforts on designing and manufacturing bags.

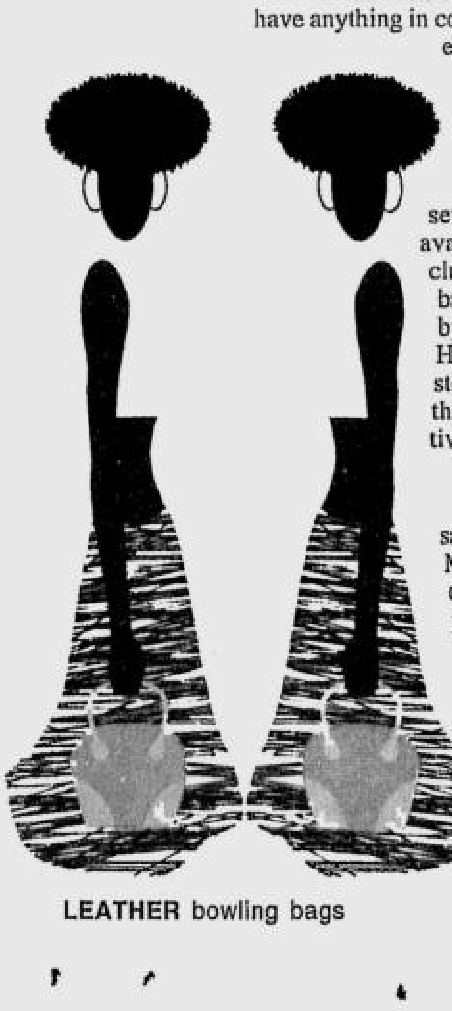
Design determination

Wendy's philosophy is simple: "Do what you like to do best." She says, "I don't want to do anything I don't want to do." Even though she may encounter some rough patches, she strives until she reaches her goal. This determination has resulted in her one-of-a-kind collections.


LEATHER bag with crochet flowers

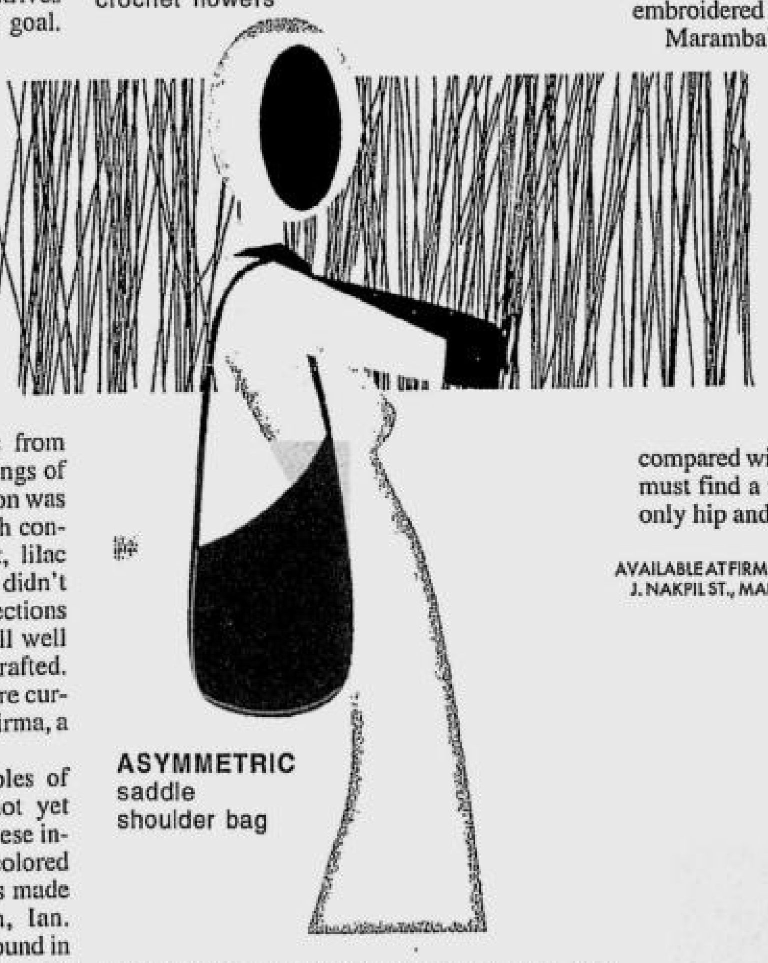
Maramba's collections are all distinct from one another, some corresponding to different times in her life. One collection consisted of bags made of raffia with seashells intricately placed. Other pieces from that collection had wooden carvings of tribal influence. Another collection was made up of suede handbags, each containing several shades of violet, lilac and kiwi. One collection really didn't have anything in common with other collections except that they were all well conceptualized and crafted. Some of these bags are currently being sold at Firma, a boutique in Malate.

Maramba has samples of several bags that are not yet available to the public. These include a set of brightly colored bags that carry drawings made by her 9-year-old son, Ian. Hopefully they will be found in stores in the near future, for these bags are fun and innovative.


LEATHER bowling bags

New materials

Though leather is always a safe choice for bags, Wendy Maramba wants to keep a lookout for new materials. She plans to go to Cebu and Bicol in search of native materials that she can use in her future creations. It's important to see what local materials have to offer because it cuts down the cost of importing materials and it's always good to go local whenever possible. Since there is a vast assortment of local materials to choose from, it is quite a challenge to pick and choose the materials that will go into her next collection.


ASYMMETRIC saddle shoulder bag

It is not just a matter of getting materials; one has to know which materials to combine. Knowing which textures go together is an important factor in making bags.

Bags may be seen as accent pieces but they also have to be durable. A quality bag doesn't only exude style; it should also be well constructed. Maramba's bags are finely crafted and well stitched. Details are meticulous, from the inner lining to the zippers and clasps.

Exceptional details

Speaking of details, even the shapes of the bags that Maramba designs are exceptional. The designer believes that the silhouette of a bag is what attracts people first. She pays much attention not only to how a bag will look but also on how it will look on the person using it. She gives her bags basic shapes but with a little twist. For instance, she gave one collection of square bags a slight wave outline—the final product was a funky little bag with a wavy A-line shape.

Maramba also has a collection of semi-flat round bags that are big enough to tote papers and notebooks.

Moreover, she makes sure that other aspects of a bag are taken care of as well. These include the length of the bag's straps and the size of a purse's armhole.

But of all the traits Maramba's bags carry, the one trait that puts her collections above the rest is her personal involvement with her creations. It's not enough for her to produce a bag; it has to be something that she can be proud of. Her bags, for example, almost always have side pockets because that's the style preferred by her mother.

Her bags look fabulous because Maramba tests her bags out herself to make sure that they have the correct proportions. She doesn't sacrifice style, however. Her bags have that X-factor, an added twist, whether it's in the shape, color or embroidered detail.

Maramba's designs attract women from ages 15-50. Her collections can be very conservative, like her natural raffia bags with floral embroidery. Still, some collections cater to the younger market with their bold colors and funky shapes. Either way, there is a bag made for almost everyone.

With the global economy in flux, the Japanese and US markets, the bag industry's two biggest markets, have reduced their orders for bags. Furthermore, this year's trade-show attendance was smaller compared with previous years. So now, Maramba must find a way to put out a product that is not only hip and current, but also affordable.

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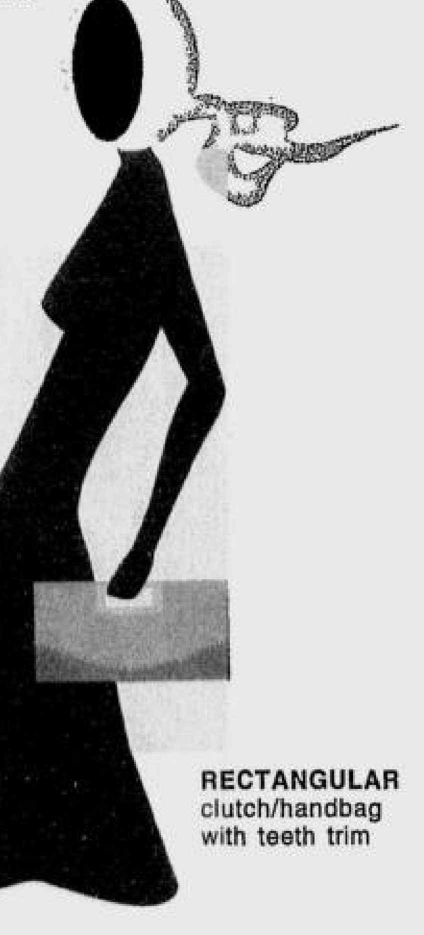

RECTANGULAR clutch/handbag with teeth trim

American icon rises again

Coach has navigated well through the vagaries of the leather fashion market

ONCE described by New York magazine as a "slumping American icon," Coach, like most leathergoods brand, is infusing seductiveness into its styles. And like most high-end leathergoods products we've written about, Coach is expanding into the global lifestyle. First, it hires a new president and executive creative director, Reed Krakoff. Then the main line—bags—is given a shot in the arm. The classic leather bucket bag and the Hampton tote have been placed alongside trendy alligator clutches, denim baguettes and a demi-zip satchel in a jacquard of adjoining C's, Coach's tribute to the logo mania.

"The marketplace is looking for a more fashion-forward look," was the stock answer from Coach in a written interview.

"The strength of the accessories market over the last few years is about fashion and innovation. As far as market studies, we show the new collection of the Coach to consumers and have had a positive response to the new design innovation and the introduction of new fabrics and styling," says Krakoff.

The business is now driven by fashion. Therefore the classics impart new silhouettes, colors and non-leather materials such as fabric, animal-printed raffia. The signature canvas totes and bucket bags with navy or black leather trim now have interesting linings like pink with green and yellow.

Reputation

The brand is developing a reputation for the perfect peacoat, trench and T-shirt. When it introduced a pair of $800 leather low-rise jeans in the flagship store, there materialized a long waiting list.

Despite the hype about the new looks of bags, Coach maintains its integrity in terms of function and durability.

"Coach spends $2 million a year on consumer and market research that includes hundreds of one-on-one consumer interviews. Coach's exceptional workforce is committed to upholding the principles of quality and integrity that made the company great," says Krakoff. "We do a lot of fabric testing and wear testing with our bags and we know and our customer tells us that the Coach quality is superior."

The leather is sourced globally with 50 percent from the US and 30 percent from Spain.

Asked how an American label can compete in the luxury leathergoods market, dominated by European brands, Krakoff says that the company offers the "classic American design" as a fashion alternative. "Coach gives the consumer the same quality and fashion-forward styling as many of the European brands at a lower price," he says. He points out the company's 50-year history. It started out as a wallet company. After the war, it was renamed Coach because most of the bags were made of saddle and bridle leather shaped into sporty bags.

Practical and smart

The classic American design is described as taking something practical and making it smart.

As an icon, it was toted by Ali McGraw in the 1972 classic "Love Story" and was a wardrobe essential in the 1980 "Preppie Handbook." It rose to prominence when Bonnie Cashin designed for the company in the '60s. Back in the '60s and '70s, she designed houndstooth wool ponchos, leather piping on tweed suits, geometric patterns on cashmere sweaters, sweaters with funnel necks that doubled as hoods and bags with unique closures.

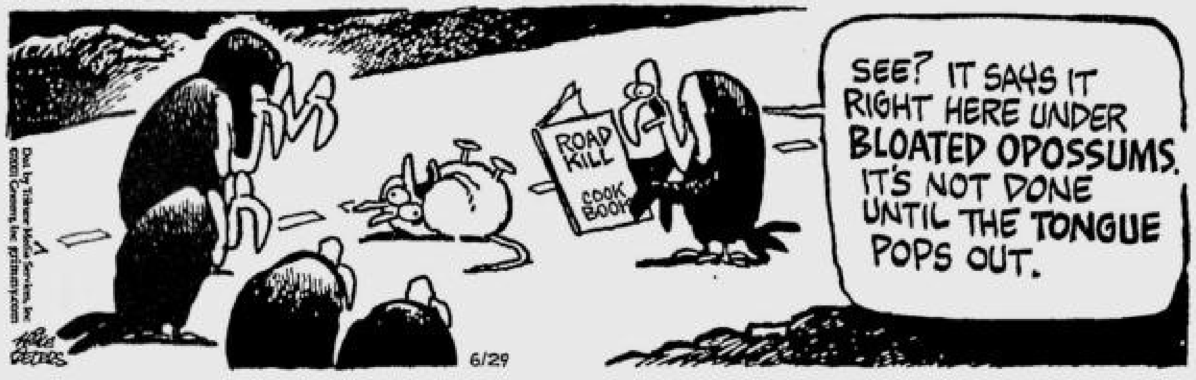
Cashin's designs preceded the utilitarian look. Some of the bags were sewn into coats. Some turned pockets into purses. Coach's new body bag replicates Cashin's 1970 design. Fendi, Gucci, Helmut Lang and Marc Jacobs' handbags with industrial-strength turnlocks and zippers have paid tribute to Cashin's designs.

Krakoff aims to maintain Coach's reputation as a trendsetter, not a me-too brand. Aside from updating the looks of the bags, the menswear collection has been making news. Now the company has licensing agreements to make ties, watches, shoes, eyewear and scarves.

Marge C. Enriquez

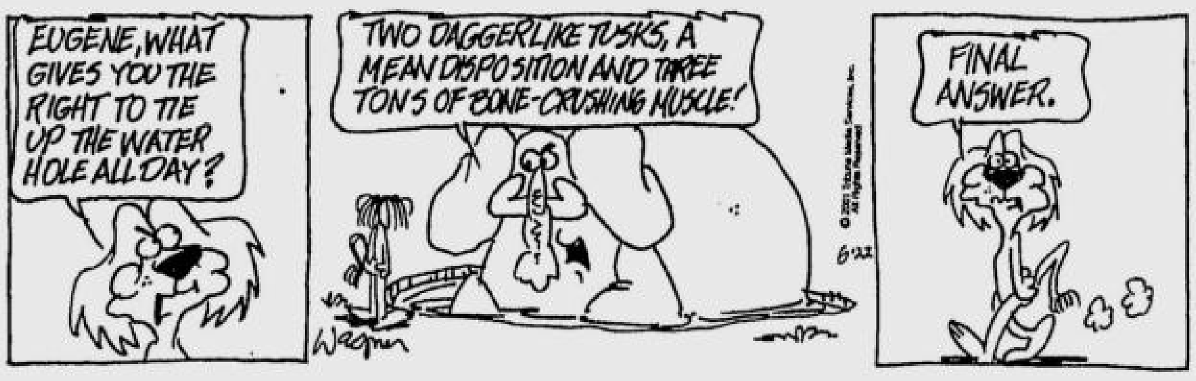
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


ROAD KILL COOK BOOK
SEE? IT SAYS IT RIGHT HERE UNDER BLOATED OPOSSUMS. IT'S NOT DONE UNTIL THE TONGUE POPS OUT.
6/29
Dist. by Tribune Media Services, Inc ©2001 Grimmy, Inc. grimmy.com

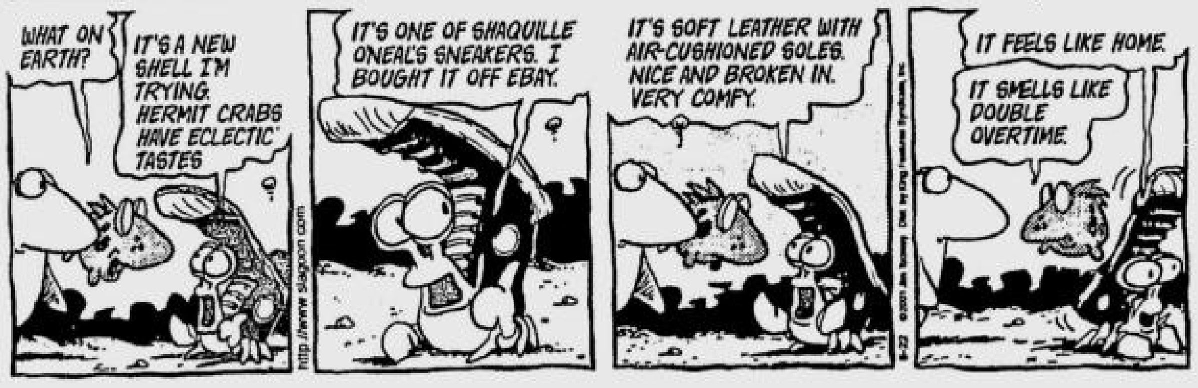
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


EUGENE, WHAT GIVES YOU THE RIGHT TO TIE UP THE WATER HOLE ALL DAY?
TWO DAGGERLIKE TUSKS, A MEAN DISPOSITION AND THREE TONS OF BONE-CRUSHING MUSCLE!
FINAL ANSWER.
6-22

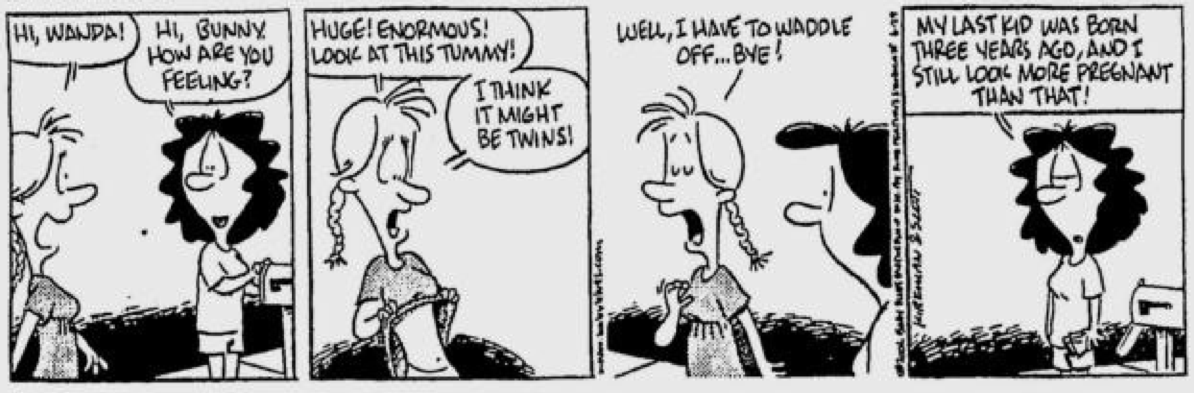
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


WHAT ON EARTH?
IT'S A NEW SHELL I'M TRYING. HERMIT CRABS HAVE ECLECTIC TASTES
IT'S ONE OF SHAQUILLE ONEAL'S SNEAKERS. I BOUGHT IT OFF EBAY.
IT'S SOFT LEATHER WITH AIR-CUSHIONED SOLES. NICE AND BROKEN IN. VERY COMFY.
IT FEELS LIKE HOME.
IT SMELLS LIKE DOUBLE OVERTIME.
http://www.slagoon.com

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HI, WANDA!
HI, BUNNY. HOW ARE YOU FEELING?
HUGE! ENORMOUS! LOOK AT THIS TUMMY!
I THINK IT MIGHT BE TWINS!
WELL, I HAVE TO WADDLE OFF... BYE!
MY LAST KID WAS BORN THREE YEARS AGO, AND I STILL LOOK MORE PREGNANT THAN THAT!

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Norman Lear, Betty Thomas, Peggy Fleming, Jerry Van Dyke, Jonathan Rhys-Meyers

Happy Birthday: Take it easy and you will accomplish far more. Becoming wound up and zealous will lead to overdoing. The more relaxed you are, the better. Put others at ease instead of goading them until they don't know which way to turn. Focus, prepare and capture others' attention. Your numbers: 8, 12, 29, 33, 41, 47

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Disagreements will cause delays. Do not become intimately involved with co-workers Gossip will damage your reputation. Your lover will be angry if you aren't spending enough time together.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Hidden assets will earn extra money today. Take the time to deal with friends or family who have been, upset. Visit those who are feeling under the weather.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Make plans with youngsters. You need to spend time outdoors. Travel or learning about foreign cultures will pique your interest. Be careful not to overspend.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Unpredictable individuals may disrupt your domestic scene. Unexpected visitors will not be a pleasant surprise. Put them to work and they'll soon be on their way.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Be careful not to divulge secret information. It's best to listen to others and work quietly on your own. Expand your circle of friends by joining new groups.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Take care of your health. Exhaustion or minor injury may result if you try to do too much. You will have an unrealistic view of your financial situation.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Your charm will enhance your popularity. A new romantic partner will appear. Participate in group events that allow you to show your talents.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Your stress level will be soaring if you have overspent on lovers or taken on other people's responsibilities. Arguments will evolve if you are overly opinionated.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Someone is watching you with interest. Keep your eyes peeled for romantic possibilities. Become involved in worthwhile groups that don't cost too much.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Your best efforts will come through organizational work. New, exciting friendships or relationships will develop through these events. Someone at home who's not included may cause problems.

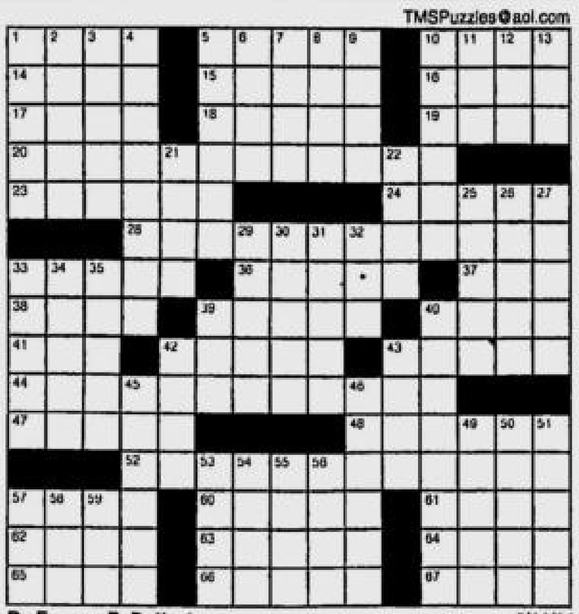
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): If you are prepared to take a risk, you may make financial gains. This is a great day to get out and enjoy an entertaining evening with friends or lovers.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Uncertainties regarding children may be upsetting. Steer clear of individuals inclined to overindulge. It is wiser to offer advice than cash as a solution to problems.

Birthday Baby: You are loving, loyal and lighthearted. You have everyone's best interests at heart and will do whatever you can to make things better. You are dedicated, a bit secretive and very clever.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Eugene R. Puffenberger
Houston, TX
6/11/01

ACROSS
1 Boars' mates
5 Provide food
10 Annoying person
14 Fairway hazard
15 San Antonio shrine
16 Sikorsky or Stravinsky
17 High: pref.
18 Kindled once again
19 Walkman creator
20 Yale
23 Globe
24 White with age
28 Yale
33 Military installations
36 Ancient kingdom on the Nile
37 "Losing My Religion" group
38 End of din?
39 Bordered
40 Connection line
41 Assam or pekoe
42 Court action
43 Full of lather
44 Yale
47 Smudge
48 Overrun
52 Yale
57 Dunfermline dagger
60 Artist Dufy
61 Took a horse
62 "It __ Necessarily So"
63 Exclusively
64 Claire and Balin
65 Cushions
66 Soft hat
67 Swindles

DOWN
1 Lead players
2 Lowest deck
3 Keep an eye on
4 "Malcolm X" director
5 Lurch and swerve
6 Pub orders
7 Bath powder
8 Arabian prince
9 Memory method
10 Six-shooter
11 Self
12 Male heir
13 Attempt
21 Novelist Murdoch
22 Flushing stadium
25 Broadcast
26 Flightless South American birds
27 M-m-m good!
29 Voided
30 Sweetener
31 Old manuscript symbols
32 Free
33 Henley and Daniel
34 George Peppard series, with "The"
35 Long look
39 Goof up
40 Of brimstone
42 Poi base
43 Novelist George
45 Male servants
46 Bluish purple
49 Bargain model: pref.
50 Car choice
51 Lock of hair
53 Grouch
54 Mazuma
55 Needy
56 Old Norse inscription
57 Blackjack
58 Actress Peeples
59 Terminus

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

P	E	S	T	I	C	I	D	E	■	B	O	R	E	S
E	N	T	H	R	O	N	E	D	■	E	X	E	R	T
S	T	R	E	A	M	I	N	G	■	S	E	P	I	A
S	E	E	■	T	O	T	■	E	S	P	Y	I	N	G
I	R	E	■	E	R	I	C	■	T	E	E	N	S	Y
M	I	T	T	■	O	A	R	■	L	A	D	■	■	■
I	N	C	A	■	S	T	O	P	■	K	A	R	A	T
S	T	A	N	S	■	E	A	R	■	S	I	E	G	E
T	O	R	A	H	■	S	K	I	D	■	S	H	I	N
■	■	■	N	I	P	■	E	V	E	■	Y	E	N	S
S	P	R	A	N	G	■	R	I	M	S	■	A	C	E
T	E	A	R	G	A	S	■	L	A	W	■	R	O	N
U	N	T	I	L	■	O	V	E	R	I	S	S	U	E
N	A	I	V	E	■	D	I	G	E	S	T	E	R	S
S	L	O	E	S	■	A	M	E	T	H	Y	S	T	S

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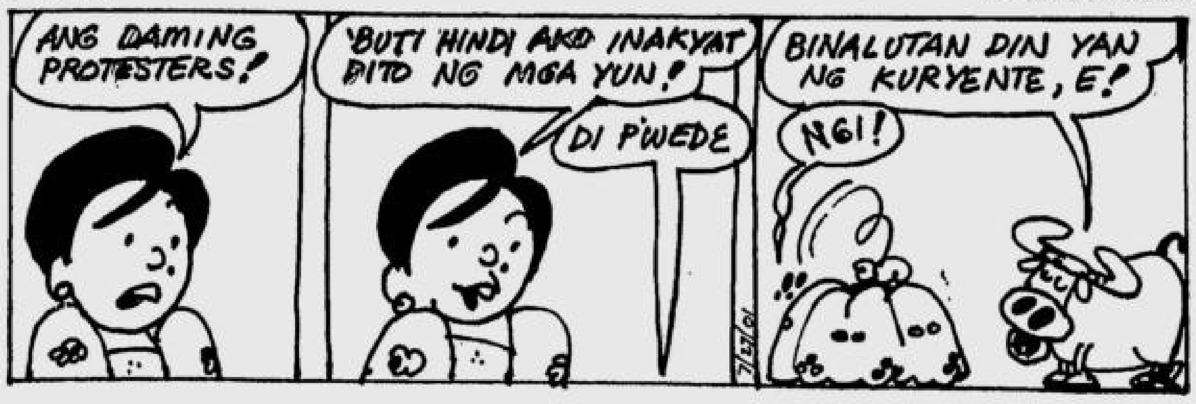
6/11/01

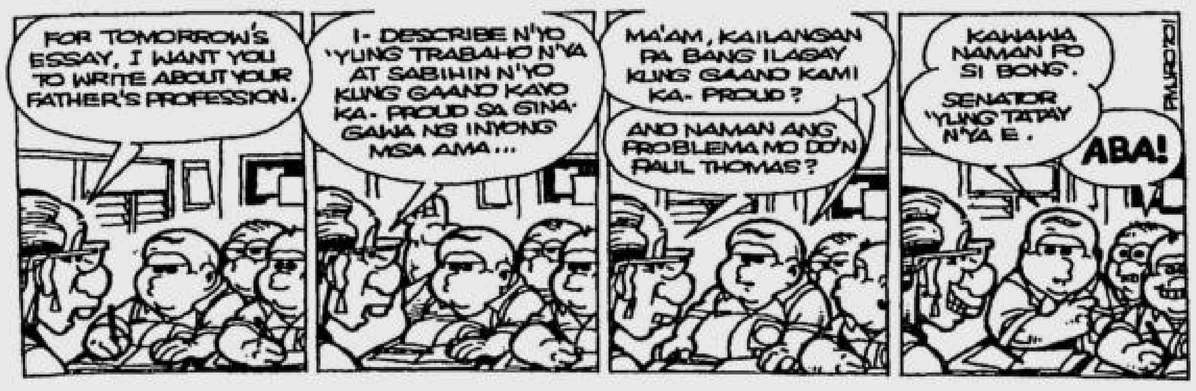
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANG DAMING PROTESTERS!
'BUTI HINDI AKO INAKYAT DITO NG MGA YUN!
DI P'WEDE
BINALUTAN DIN YAN NG KURYENTE, E!
NGI!
7.27.01

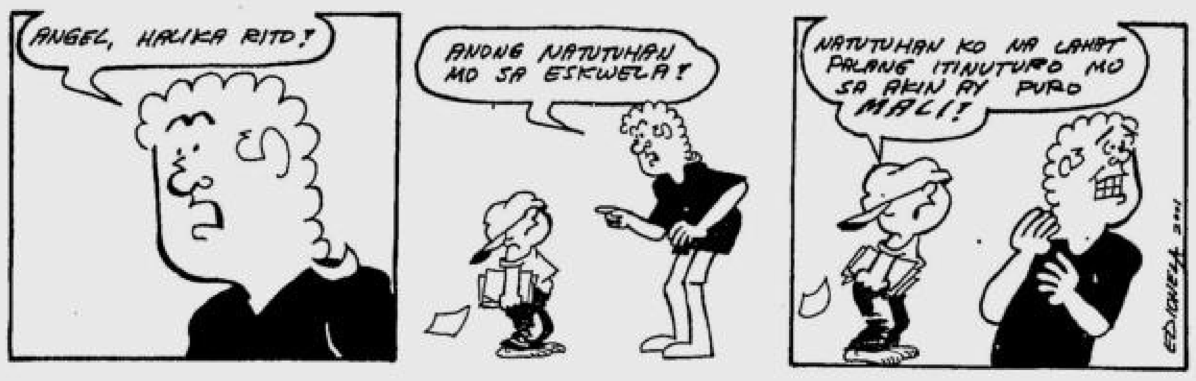
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


FOR TOMORROW'S ESSAY, I WANT YOU TO WRITE ABOUT YOUR FATHER'S PROFESSION.
I- DESCRIBE N'YO 'YUNG TRABAHO N'YA AT SABIHIN N'YO KUNG GAANO KAYO KA- PROUD SA GINA- GAWA NG INYONG MGA AMA...
MA'AM, KAILANGAN PA BANG ILAGAY KUNG GAANO KAMI KA- PROUD?
ANO NAMAN ANG PROBLEMA MO DO'N PAUL THOMAS?
KAWAWA NAMAN PO SI BONG.
SENATOR 'YUNG TATAY N'YA E.
ABA!
PMJR07.01

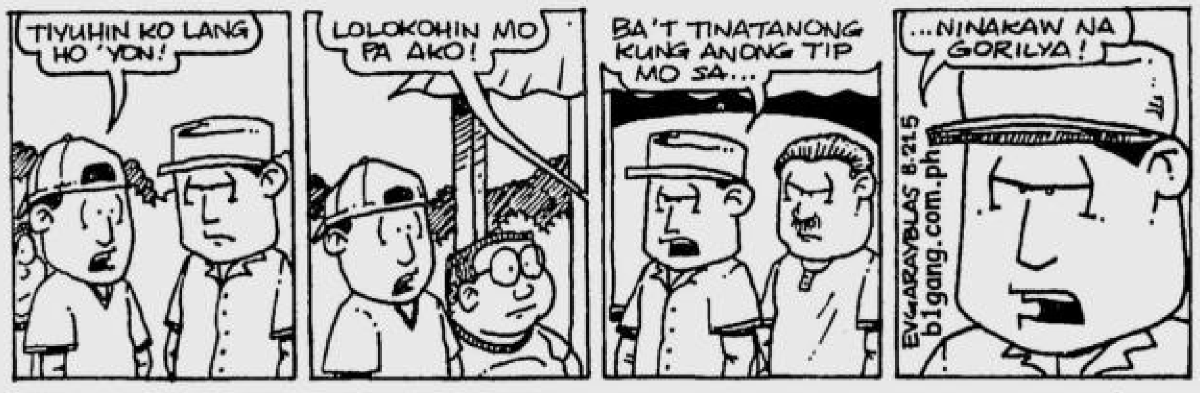
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


ANGEL, HALIKA RITO!
ANONG NATUTUHAN MO SA ESKWELA?
NATUTUHAN KO NA LAHAT PALANG ITINUTURO MO SA AKIN AY PURO MALI!
EDIONELA 2001

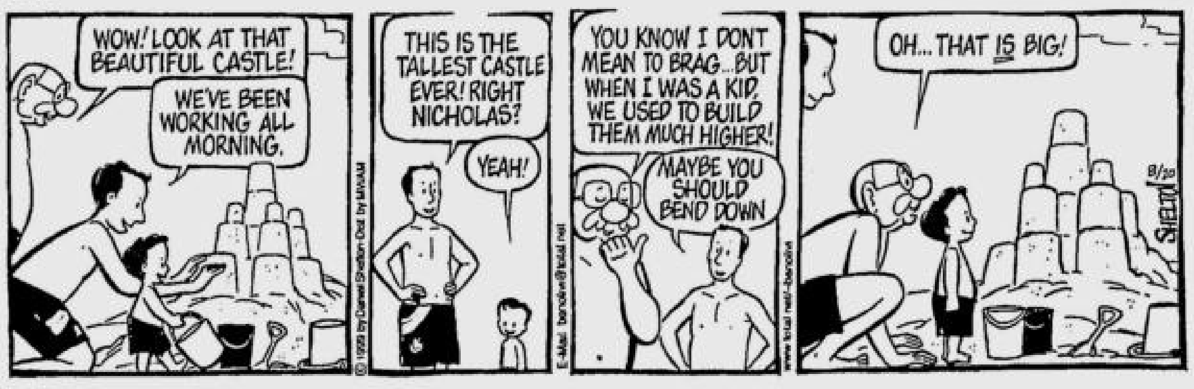
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


TIYUHIN KO LANG HO 'YON!
LOLOKOHIN MO PA AKO!
BA'T TINATANONG KUNG ANONG TIP MO SA...
...NINAKAW NA GORILYA!
EVGARAYBLAS 8.21.5
b1gang.com.ph

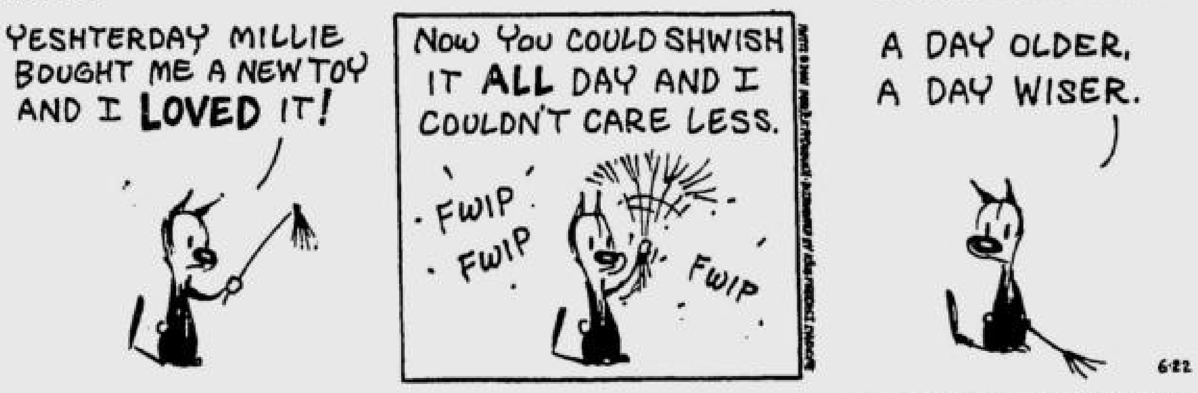
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WOW! LOOK AT THAT BEAUTIFUL CASTLE!
WE'VE BEEN WORKING ALL MORNING.
THIS IS THE TALLEST CASTLE EVER! RIGHT NICHOLAS?
YEAH!
YOU KNOW I DONT MEAN TO BRAG...BUT WHEN I WAS A KID, WE USED TO BUILD THEM MUCH HIGHER!
MAYBE YOU SHOULD BEND DOWN
OH...THAT IS BIG!
8/20
SHELTON

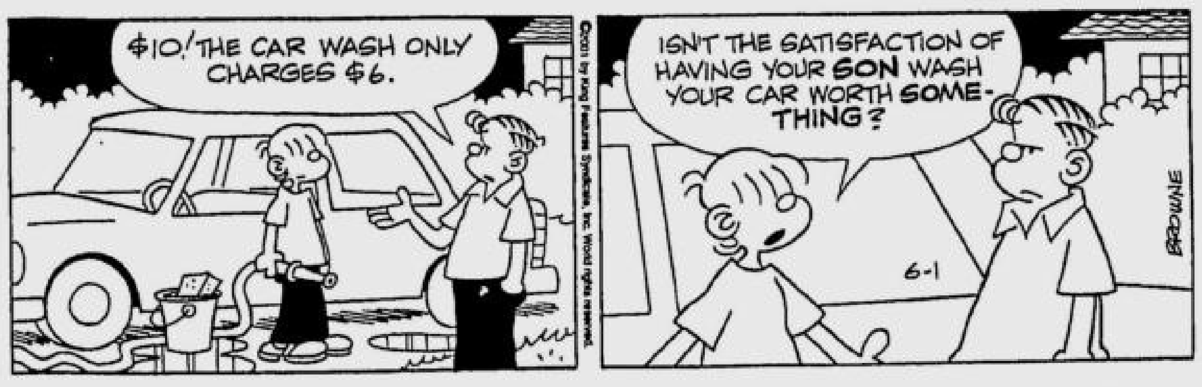
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


YESHTERDAY MILLIE BOUGHT ME A NEW TOY AND I LOVED IT!
NOW YOU COULD SHWISH IT ALL DAY AND I COULDN'T CARE LESS.
FWIP
FWIP
FWIP
A DAY OLDER, A DAY WISER.
6-22

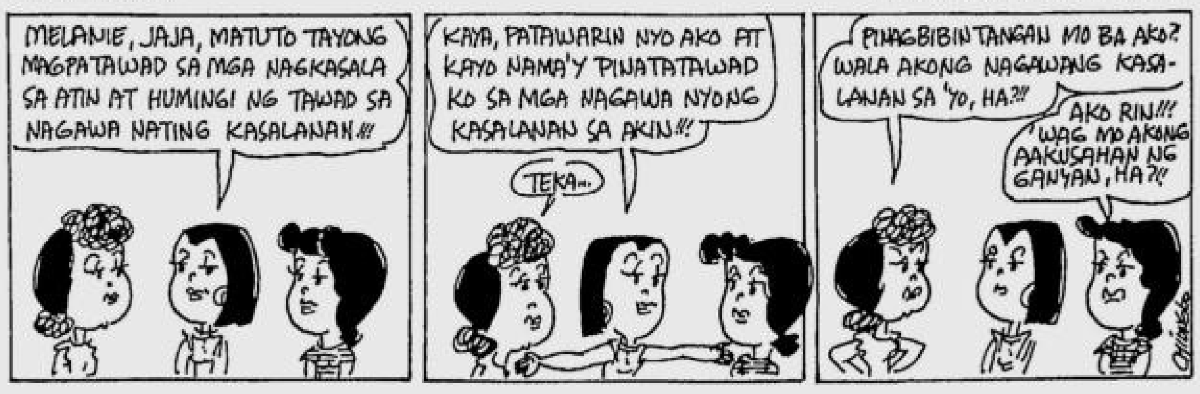
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


$10! THE CAR WASH ONLY CHARGES $6.
ISN'T THE SATISFACTION OF HAVING YOUR SON WASH YOUR CAR WORTH SOMETHING?
6-1
BROWNE
©2001 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.

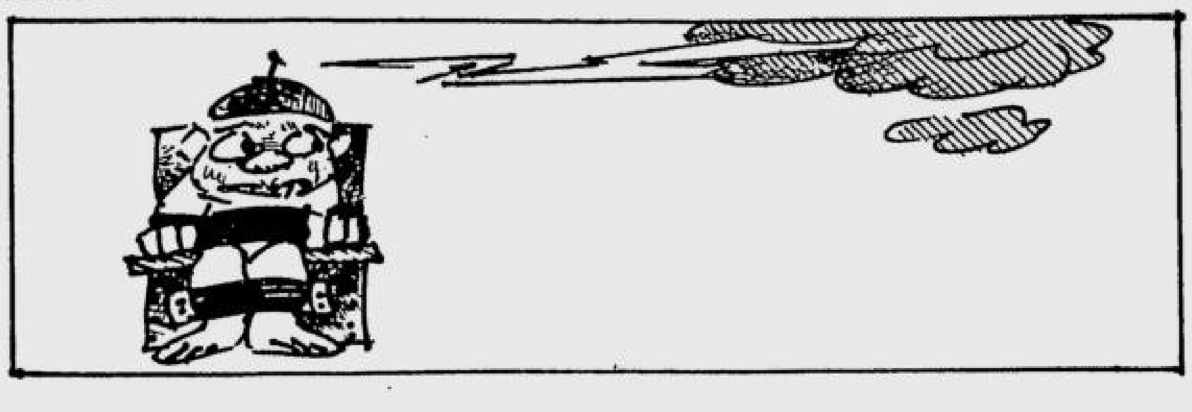
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MELANIE, JAJA, MATUTO TAYONG MAGPATAWAD SA MGA NAGKASALA SA ATIN AT HUMINGI NG TAWAD SA NAGAWA NATING KASALANAN!!!
KAYA, PATAWARIN NYO AKO AT KAYO NAMA'Y PINATATAWAD KO SA MGA NAGAWA NYONG KASALANAN SA AKIN!!!
TEKA...
PINAGBIBINTANGAN MO BA AKO? WALA AKONG NAGAWANG KASALANAN SA 'YO, HA?!!
AKO RIN!!! WAG MO AKONG AAKUSAHAN NG GANYAN, HA?!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING



GO layering with wrap top over a chemise and checkered pants. Or get a bold pink shirt over a light pink tank and sheer white bottom. CLOTHES FROM BAYO

Beyond the prettiness of pink

By Camille T. Cruz
Photos by Chito Vecina
PICTORIAL DIRECTION BY ALBERT AVELLANA

> The pretty color can define its own conventions and go bold

I REMEMBER pink. There was that rich, hot and sugary scent of cotton candy in school. There were also the tubes and tubes of lipstick in matte or glossy shades. Also bubble gum.

The world of pink was first found in the nursery. It resembled the sweet softness of a baby. It spelled comfort.

Today, pink can stand alone or in perfect harmony with another color. It can stand in [illegible] background like white.

White can be paired with black or khaki, sometimes to predictable lengths. An alternative is pink.

Pink can be worn in all shades. Hot pink can combine nicely with white.

Metallic baby pink is an alternative to matte pink.

Pink and white are rich with possibilities. If you are going for a casual and sporty look, you may want to go cotton on top and bottom. A white knit top can be paired off with printed pink gingham cigarette pants. When you want to go conservative and chic, a pink round-neck T-shirt worn under a hot pink jacket paired off with a white skirt and ribbon accent is sophisticated and stylish.

For those who care to be slightly different, a little detail makes simplicity work wonders. For example, a shirt in a striped pink and white printed fabric becomes edgy with an overlapping belted string detail. Too pretty? You may go for a knee-length metallic powder pink skirt to introduce a little flirtation to the look.

You can move away from the baby world of pink. After all, it is not about looking pretty all the time.

zed

Is he a lover or a loser? Find out with zed Horoscope plus.

Find out what's in store for your love life with zed horoscope plus. Use your cell phone to get a daily love horoscope or personal zodiac sign logo at the touch of a button. You can also check out career tips (keyword: CH <SIGN>), our daily survival guide for teens (keyword: TH <SIGN>) plus advice with girl power (keyword: FH <SIGN>) or a macho kick (keyword: MH <SIGN>).

Check out your own zodiac logo!

Aries LOGO ARIES	Leo LOGO LEO	Sagittarius LOGO SAGITTARIUS
Taurus LOGO TAURUS	Virgo LOGO VIRGO	Capricorn LOGO CAPRICORN
Gemini LOGO GEMINI	Libra LOGO LIBRA	Aquarius LOGO AQUARIUS
Cancer LOGO CANCER	Scorpio LOGO SCORPIO	Pisces LOGO PISCES

How to get a logo:

1 Type in keyword. Ex.: LOGO LEO.
2 Send to 288.
3 Save upon receiving logo.

How to get your love horoscope for the day:

1 Type in LH <SIGN> Ex.: LH LEO
2 Send to 288.
3 You will receive your love horoscope in a moment.

Services available exclusively to SMART Gold, SMART Buddy and Talk N' Text subscribers. Logos available to selected Nokia phones only. ₱12.00 for every succesful download of logo. ₱2.50 per horoscope received.

www.zed.com

Psst, Pepito!

Pe-pito na lang ba'ng buhok mo? Bago pa mabawasan, tawag na!

Call the Regroe Company
817-33-03

DON'T BE A JOKE FOREVER!

Arabohok. Pepito.

Have you ever been called one of these hurtful taunts? Leave it to the Pinoy to come up with funny jeers. These nicknames, though often said in jest, are anything but funny. Losing one's hair is never funny.

If you're 25 and up, male, exposed to stress, harsh chemicals and unbalanced diet, you are bound to lose hair. Anyone of these can trigger falling hair, which if not immediately arrested, can lead to irreversible baldness. Many so-called remedies have come out in the market claiming wonders and magic to bring back your hair. Unfortunately, most of them just don't work. Some can even cause harmful side effects.

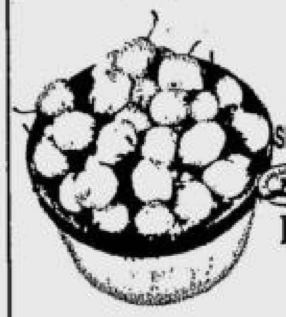
Good thing there are scientifically-tested and highly-effective hair growth formula like **Minoxidil Regroe. Regroe** is a result of years of study in the U.S. and is one of the few medications that has proven efficacy. 80% of users have grown their hair back in 6 months. Some start to grow their hair back in as early as two months. For some, falling hair stops at the first month of use. At two months, new hair starts to grow. At 6 months, all lost hair will have been recovered.

Arabohok? AGA nalagas? Don't be a joke forever. Do something about your hair loss before it's too late - call the **Regroe Hotline at 817-3303.**

RETURN COUPON
NAME ____
ADDRESS ____
____
SIGNATURE ____

TOTAL LOWER COST

Kids@Play

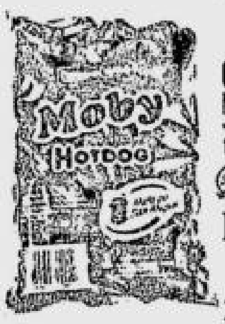


Shandong Pears
TLC PRICE
P44.00/kg.

MONTEREY
Ground Round
TLC PRICE
P137.00/kg.
Reg. Price 164.00/kg.

CDO
Regular Sliced Ham
- Sweet
- Cooked
- Canadian

250 g.
TLC PRICE
P33.50
Reg. Price 37.50

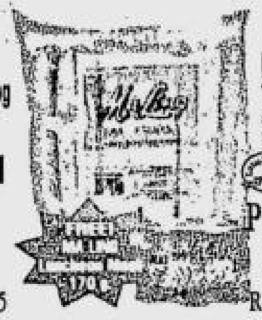


CAMPO CARNE
Moby Hotdog
- Cocktail

1 kg.
TLC PRICE
P128.00
Reg. Price 134.50

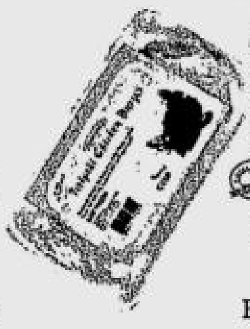
SWIFT
Sweet 'n Juicy Hotdog
- Regular

1 kg.
TLC PRICE
P93.00
Reg. Price 98.75



MA LING
Tuna Franks
500 g.
2's
TLC PRICE
P170.00
Reg. Price 180.00

ROEL'S
Chicken Hotdog
1 kg.
*Available in SM Pampanga only
TLC PRICE
P99.00
Reg. Price 108.75



ARMSTRONG
Hamburger Patties
- Beef
- Teriyaki Chicken
- Chorizo

500 g.
TLC PRICE
P59.00
Reg. Price 67.00

NEW SEÑORITO
Mixed Vegetables
500 g.
TLC PRICE
P48.00
Reg. Price 52.50

KNORR
Chicken Powder
1 kg.
TLC PRICE
P207.50
Reg. Price 213.50

KNORR
Pang-Gisa Mix
40 g.
TLC PRICE
P9.25
Reg. Price 9.95

JUFRAN
Banana Ketchup
320 g.
TLC PRICE
P9.40
Reg. Price 9.70

COOKBEST
Vegetable Oil
PET
1 Liter
TLC PRICE
P32.65
Reg. Price 33.65

555
Tuna
- All Variants

155 g./5's
TLC PRICE
P60.50
Reg. Price 61.75

555
Sardines
- In Tomato Sauce
- With Chili

155 g./5's
TLC PRICE
P39.00
Reg. Price 40.00

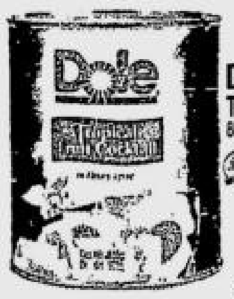
DAK
Pork Luncheon Meat
340 g.
TLC PRICE
P47.50
Reg. Price 49.50

PUREFOODS
Carne Norte
Junior Size
150 g.
TLC PRICE
P16.75
Reg. Price 17.75

MOON DISH
Laing In Can
155 g.
TLC PRICE
P22.00
Reg. Price 23.50

HUNT'S
Pork & Beans
165 g.
TLC PRICE
P10.65
Reg. Price 11.25

DEL MONTE
Pasta Italiana
Elbow Macaroni
1 kg.
TLC PRICE
P49.50
Reg. Price 51.75



DOLE
Tropical Fruit Cocktail
836 g.
TLC PRICE
P45.50
Reg. Price 47.75

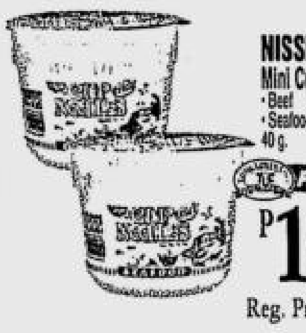
WALTER
Thick Slice
Super Loaf
600 g.
TLC PRICE
P25.75
Reg. Price 29.75

MAGNOLIA
Cheezee Filled
Cheese
200 g.
TLC PRICE
P22.25
Reg. Price 24.25

KRAFT
Cheez Whiz
- Plain

250 g.
TLC PRICE
P41.50
Reg. Price 43.50

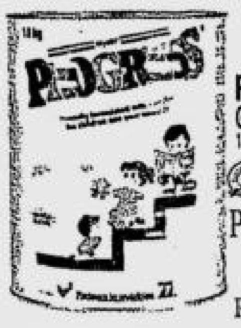
CDO
Liver Spread
85 g.
TLC PRICE
P9.00
Reg. Price 9.75



NISSIN
Mini Cup Noodles
- Beef
- Seafood

40 g.
TLC PRICE
P10.50
Reg. Price 10.75

MILO
Tonic Food Drink
Refill
600 g.
TLC PRICE
P72.50
Reg. Price 74.50



PROGRESS
Growing Up Milk
1.8 kg.
TLC PRICE
P679.00
Reg. Price 692.00

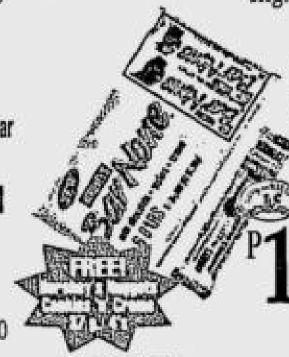
ALASKA
Powdered Filled Milk
Pouch
350 g.
TLC PRICE
P53.00
Reg. Price 54.75

GERBER
For Moms
- Orange

250 g.
TLC PRICE
P99.75
Reg. Price 105.50

JELLYACE
Buko Pandan
288 g./18's
TLC PRICE
P15.50
Reg. Price 16.50

SUCERE
Twizzle
Chocomallow Bar
24's
TLC PRICE
P21.50
Reg. Price 22.50



HERSHEY'S
BarNone
6's
TLC PRICE
P124.50

SMINT
- Peppermint
- Sugar Free Mint

40's
TLC PRICE
P40.00
Reg. Price 42.75

QUEEN
Corn Starch
200 g.
TLC PRICE
P9.50
Reg. Price 10.25

BLUSKIES
Rich & Creamy
Crackers
- Plain

25 g./10's
TLC PRICE
P16.00
Reg. Price 17.50

BUGSY BEAR
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Chocolate Cookies
40 g.
TLC PRICE
P7.00
Reg. Price 7.95

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- Choco Fudge
- Choco Swirl
- Brownies

252 g.
TLC PRICE
P51.00
Reg. Price 55.00

SUPERSTIX
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- Choco
- Pandan
- Mocha

480 g.
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P48.00
Reg. Price 49.50

MICKEY & FRIENDS
Choco Snack
- With Sugar Rice
- With Choco Delight
- With Chunky Peanut

55 g.
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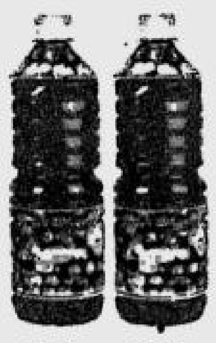
Reg. Price 17.25

NESTEA
Iced Tea
- Lemon

750 g.
TLC PRICE
P74.50

ZEST-O
Choc-O Milk Drink
200 mL.
TLC PRICE
P8.00
Reg. Price 8.75



NUTRILICIOUS
Calamansi
Concentrate
1000 mL.
TLC PRICE
P136.50
Reg. Price 144.75

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MUG ROOTBEER
In Can
330 mL.
TLC PRICE
P10.00
Reg. Price 10.95

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500 mL.
TLC PRICE
P9.00
Reg. Price 9.75

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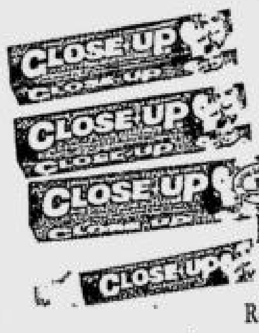
Gold Reserve Brandy
700 mL.
TLC PRICE
P475.00
Reg. Price 499.00

ORAL-B
Advantage
Toothbrush
- Soft

35/#40
TLC PRICE
P84.75
Reg. Price 89.75



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Toothpaste
- Red
- Blue
- Green

50 mL.
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125 mL.
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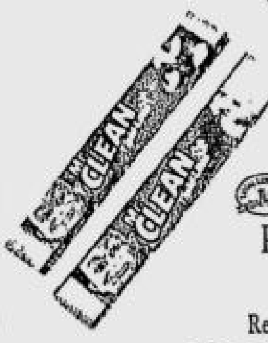

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Crunchy Bites
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She socked it to 'em

Our forbearance has a way of turning into 'doormat-ism.' But once in a while, you come across this woman who did what many of us could only dream of

THIS woman has done what many could only dream of—she gave **Miriam Santiago** a piece of her mind, in public. Walked up to the honorable public servant one fine weekend in a new price club and to her face, told her what she thought of her performance—the stuff you only read about in text messages until then. Weekend shopping had never been this gratifying. Her chance encounter went around in the e-mail. I chuckled when I was reading it but never thought it was for real until I met this thirtysomething woman at one luncheon.

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

Dr. **Weewee Partosa** wrote in her e-mail, and I excerpt: "I brought my kids shopping and who should I see but Miriam Defensor Santiago. I had a few things to say to her so together with my kids (ages 7, 2 and 7 months) I approached her and introduced my firstborn. I can almost quote myself verbatim because I had, for so long, dreamed of this moment.

"I said in tones only she could have heard as I didn't want to embarrass her:

"Me: 'Senator Santiago, this is my son **Luis**. I am teaching him to disagree agreeably and there are a number of things you've done and said as senator that we disagree with, that we feel are shameful and shameless and have done our country so much damage.'

"MDS: 'You're sooo mean! Here I was having a nice day and you attacked me!' (She was screaming her lungs out.)

"Me: 'I didn't attack you. You are a public servant and I am entitled to this.'

"MDS: 'You don't even know me personally! You're so mean!'

"Me: 'Well, that's it precisely. This is nothing personal... This is my take on you as senator.'

"After another round of non sequiturs I just said, 'For the sake of our country, I hope you lose.' A scream a mile long. I was pretty cool at the time as my sons were watching, but what got to me was as soon as I turned around, there was Miriam's bodyguard who very menacingly asked me what I had done. I said, '*Ang karapatan ko.*'"

Then Dr. Partosa went on to recount how she stood up to the bodyguards.

Poor (ex) senator, a victim of one citizen's "mean-ness."

But as Dr. Partosa explained at the end of the story—"And why is it they feel entitled to have a nice day in the grocery, without fear of harassment from the very people they screw around over and over? What does it say about us as a people that after playing a major role in the destruction of our nation, **Imelda Marcos** can have her quiet cup of coffee at Starbucks without fear of rebuke from the very people she stole from over and over, too?... If **Tony Blair** gets an egg thrown at him for some piddling thing he did, and gamely, graciously accepts it is because he understands quite clearly the concept of PUBLIC SERVANT, I don't see why Miriam and her ilk who do definite and deep damage feel they are above public censure."

My answer to Dr. Partosa is—we don't throw eggs at people; Pinoys use eggs to make *leche flan*, but not as missiles. In the first place, eggs are beyond the average Filipino's means.

Second, we are a "nice" people, our inhibition and forced civility take precedence over our anger and disgust. Our forbearance has a way of always turning into "doormat-ism."

But then once in a rare while, you find the likes of a Dr. Partosa among our "nice" people, with the guts to be brutally frank and assertive—in public. *Napuno rin*, in short.

As Dr. Partosa told our group over lunch, it was her way of teaching her kids—young as they are—to speak their minds out before an elected official. Many can only hyperventilate their disgust in coffeeshops, some write letters to the editor; well, Dr. Partosa always has the good luck of finding herself in the same public space as an elected official—and to hear her sisters recount it, she certainly doesn't pass up her chance. Even as a student at Miriam College, she shouted down the guest speaker—**Juan Ponce Enrile**.

In one PMA reunion (her husband is a PMAer), she was dying to bring a placard but since she was told placards were a no-no, especially if they were carried by wives, she just prayed that she would be in a good distance away from the guest of honor, **Gringo Honasan**. So even with bad eyesight, she spotted him in the distinguished crowd and proceeded to do her act—she booed—a conspicuous act no doubt among demure wives. To his credit, Gringo only smiled at her.

One Sunday lunch at a Chinese restaurant,

SHE/p.E8

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Program counsels troubled teens

LIVE AND LET LIVE

Tita Dulce

DEAR Tita Dulce,

Your column is truly being used by the Lord especially in these difficult times. God bless your soul! There will always be coping mechanisms to enable people to live with the faith that the Divine Providence will always be there as Father to His children. It is almost the only "string" that holds families together.

At the School of the Holy Spirit, we have the Community Outreach Program which conducts classes and also offers live-in sessions for counseling and family life, strengthening of character particularly for teenagers with problems like early pregnancy, drugs, alcoholism, etc. Poor participants pay very little and they bring their own food. Those who can afford pay P2,000 per month for counseling and tutorial and another P2,000 for food.

Participants also act as tutors or helpers to younger pupils. Field trips to selected institutions are organized to generate a deeper appreciation of God's blessings. But focus is really on self-awareness and conscientization for a more effective "self," and member of family and country.

Those interested can call (046) 417-0411 (6-9 p.m. only) and (046) 872-1018, daily.

CRISTINA OCAMPO-FERRER, MSSW
Director/behaviorist

Thank you for your valuable info. Many teenagers will surely get in touch with you.

For those interested, the address of the Community Outreach Program Charity School: M. Alvarez Extension, Talon 5, Las Piñas City. The Life Adjustment Seminars for Out-of-School Youth are held 5-8 p.m. daily.

Ms Ferrer is with the School of the Holy Spirit-Cavite, Kalayaan Subd., Molino 2, Bacoor, Cavite. The school has a preschool, grade school and high school.

Looking for his ROTC sponsor

READING about that young child looking for her real father in Australia gave me the courage to seek help in locating a friend who was my ROTC sponsor in UP Diliman back in the '50s. I just want to say hello and to reminisce on the good old Diliman days. I'm sure that by this time, she is happily married with a family of her own.

I am also now happily married. I married my sponsor during my senior year in the advance ROTC.

I attended several alumni homecomings hoping to see my old friend but she was never there. I also went to the UP Alumni Center to get her address but she is not listed. Her name is Juanita de la Paz and she is from Meycauayan, Bulacan. She belonged to Class 1957 of the UP College of Business Administration.

I am already 65 years old, retired and residing in southern Mindanao.

JOE

If she or her children read this, they may get in touch with Joe at e-mail jose_confesor@yahoo.com.

From Brian Gates

FYI, I got 257 replies by 3:35 p.m., May 6. The next day, there were 153 more. Your column's readers seem to be overwhelmingly female.

Some of the responses came from Australia, Germany and the United States. About 25 percent were sent by cell phones.

I got one criticism from a 41-year-old lady. I will update you later.

BRIAN GATES

Your mailbox was full, so you may not have received my request for your address. There are five letters here for you from readers who do not have e-mail.

E-mail titadulce@netscape.net or send letters to P.O. Box 2353, Makati CPO 1263 Makati City, or PDI, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City

Rates pour down at appliance store

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Pintas nang pintas ang ibang panlaba, yun pala, may chalk din sila.

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Search for young eco-warriors ongoing

SEEING GREEN

Doris Gaskell Nuyda

BAYER Philippines and Luntiang Pilipinas have embarked on a joint project in search of the Bayer Young Environmental Envoys. The search is one more project undertaken by corporations to get young Filipinos—in fact, young people everywhere—to be more concerned about the environment.

The local search has the cooperation of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) for the participants, Filipino college students, ages 18-24, are required to be enrolled in a CHED-recognized college or university. Submission of applications ends July 30.

The search begins with an essay contest on the theme, "My Personal Contribution to the Environment and How It Has Made a Difference," in not more than 500 words. The contest will be conducted in four regional divisions—Metro Manila, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

The top 10 scorers from each region will enter the semifinal round, and be interviewed in their region by a panel of judges. Out of the total 40 contestants, the top four scorers from each region, 16 in all, will be declared Bayer Young Environmental Envoys, automatically entitling them to membership in the prestigious Bayer Young Environmental Envoys Club.

Eco-camp

As club members, they will have the opportunity to participate in a three-day eco-camp and live-in seminar workshop where they will undergo comprehensive training on all aspects of environmental protection.

The eco-camp is another aspect of the contest, for at the end of it, another set of judges will select the top seven who will go on an educational trip to Germany, which is not only the headquarters of host company Bayer (considered the biggest chemical and health corporation worldwide), but also a country well-known for its highly developed environmental practices.

The trip to Germany, which is scheduled for Oct. 13-19, provides further training for youth leaders in exploring solutions to environmental problems. The "young envoys" get the chance to exchange views on the environment with youths from both the host and participating countries. They also get an opportunity to observe firsthand environmentally sound technologies as applied in Germany.

Origin of the search

The Search for Young Environmental Envoys originated in Thailand in 1995, initiated by an association of Thai environmentalists and a group of companies operating in that country. In 1997, the UNEP's (United Nations Environmental Program) regional office for Asia and the Pacific adopted the project and provided overall supervision in its implementation. With the success of that first search, the project was expanded to the international level, and now includes youth leaders from Singapore and Malaysia.

Project sponsors

According to Dorothy Claro, Bayer Philippines representative, Bayer has practiced environmental awareness as early as 1901 when it established the Wastewater Commission at company headquarters in Leverkusen, Germany. It subsequently became one of the leaders of the worldwide initiative called "Responsible Care," its contribution to sustainable development. Today, according to Claro, Bayer's environmental involvement has become a corporate commitment shared by its 120,400 employees around the world.

Luntiang Pilipinas, or Green Philippines, is a nationwide urban forestry program that promotes environmental awareness among Filipinos. It works as a catalyst in environmental protection and preservation through a corps of eco-warriors of all ages, but especially the youth. Sen. Loren Legarda Leviste is honorary chair of the program.

For more details on the Bayer search, contact Bayer Philippines Inc., Bayer House, P.O. Box 4600 Manila, or Canlubang Industrial Estate, Laguna 40281. Also contact Luntiang Pilipinas, c/o Frances Amper, tel. 892-8640.

Cathay Pacific goes ahead with South African prize trip

THE FOUR young Filipinos (ages 16-18) who won the four top slots in Cathay Pacific Airlines' environmental essay contest are leaving for the Rustenburg Wilderness Experience in South Africa on Aug. 15. The trip was rescheduled from its original date, July 15, due to changes in flight schedules.

The four young Filipinos will join 40 other Asian students in Rustenburg for hands-on lessons on the care and appreciation of the environment. The Filipinos are Alfonso Tomas Araullo, Christine Anievas, Ma. Angela G. Zafra and Tara Cantones.

Colloquium on new media at UST

THE DEPARTMENT of Communication Arts and Journalism of the University of Santo Tomas will hold a colloquium on "New Information and Communication Technologies: Implications to Liberal Arts Education" on July 28, at 9 a.m. at the audio-visual room of the Faculty of Arts and Letters, St. Raymund of Penafort Building, UST campus, España, Manila.

Papers to be read are "Feasibility of an Online Course in Communication" (Prof. Jeremiah Opiniano); "Controlling the Content of Media: Gender Representation in STD Ads" (Prof. Aurora Tuble); "The Philippines' Infocomm Future: Implications to Higher Education" (Prof. Joyce Arriola); and "Old and New Media Ethics" (Prof. Joselito Zulueta).

Moderating the colloquium are Professors Jose Arsenio Salandanan and Cesar Orsal. Arts and Letters Dean Dr. Armando de Jesus will give his remarks.

Founded in 1936, the Department of Communication Arts and Journalism of the Faculty of Arts and Letters is the oldest existing school for journalism and communication arts in the Philippines. Many of the country's leading print and media journalists, creative writers, advertising and public relations practitioners and communication educators have come from the school.

Review classes set

THE PHILIPPINE Association of Teachers of Library Science (PATLS) will hold review classes for librarians from Aug. 5 to Oct. 14, at the UST Graduate School every Sunday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Distinguished experts have been tapped to give intensive review lectures. Call 731-3034/3101, local 8343, 521-1970, 524-9740 and 735-85-08.

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3. All purchases made by members from July 27, 2001 to December 31, 2001 will earn raffle entries and reward points.
4. To earn raffle entries and reward points, members must present their card every time they make a purchase. The Monterey NMS cashier swipes the card on the Electronic Data Capture (EDC) terminal. The EDC terminal system will generate the assigned raffle numbers and calculate reward points the member has earned.
   If the member does not have his card upon purchase, he may avail of his points by bringing his card and official receipt during his next visit to the Meatshop.
5. Members may inquire about the number of raffle entries and reward points they have earned at their selected Monterey NMS.
6. The winning entries will be drawn electronically. The draw will be on January 18, 2002 at Monterey's office located at the 23rd floor, San Miguel Properties Center Bldg., St. Francis Street, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City, at 4:00 p.m. A DTI representative will be invited to witness the draw.
7. Raffle draw winners will be notified through registered mail.
8. A member can win only once in the raffle draw. If a name is drawn more than once, he/she gets the bigger prize.
9. All Grand Raffle Prizes may be claimed from Monterey's office located at the 23rd floor, San Miguel Properties Center Bldg., St. Francis Street, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City. Consolation Prizes can be redeemed at the selected Monterey Neighborhood Meatshop.
10. Redemption period for raffle prizes is within 60 days from receipt of notification. Unclaimed prizes after the 60-day period will be forfeited with prior DTI approval. The 20% tax in excess of P10,000 for raffle prizes will be paid by Monterey Foods Corporation. All prizes are not convertible to cash.
11. Member may redeem reward prizes contained in the rewards catalog in exchange for the reward points they have earned, anytime during the promotion period or until 60 days after the promotion, for as long as they have accumulated sufficient reward points for the reward of their choice. Member is required to bring their Valid ID and registered mail notification.
12. To redeem their reward prizes, members must place their orders at their selected Monterey NMS outlets only through the EDC terminals.
13. Reward points earned will be credited to each member's account 24 hours after each purchase. Thus, only previous available points balance can be used for redemption and the next request can be done 48 hours after the last request.
14. Members choose the reward of their choice from the rewards selection and take note of the reward code. Members give their membership card and reward code of the rewards they have chosen to the NMS cashier who will assist them in encoding their request at the EDC terminal.
15. Large reward prizes will be delivered to the member's address within 30 days from ordering date. For small reward items, the reward will be delivered to the member's selected NMS outlet on a specified date. Members or their duly designated representatives must present a Valid ID upon delivery of reward prizes and sign on the delivery receipt.
16. Employees of Monterey Foods Corporation, Meatshop franchisees and employees, its incentive marketing agency, advertising agency, including their relatives up to second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from the raffle draw. However, they may qualify to earn reward points and redeem reward prizes.

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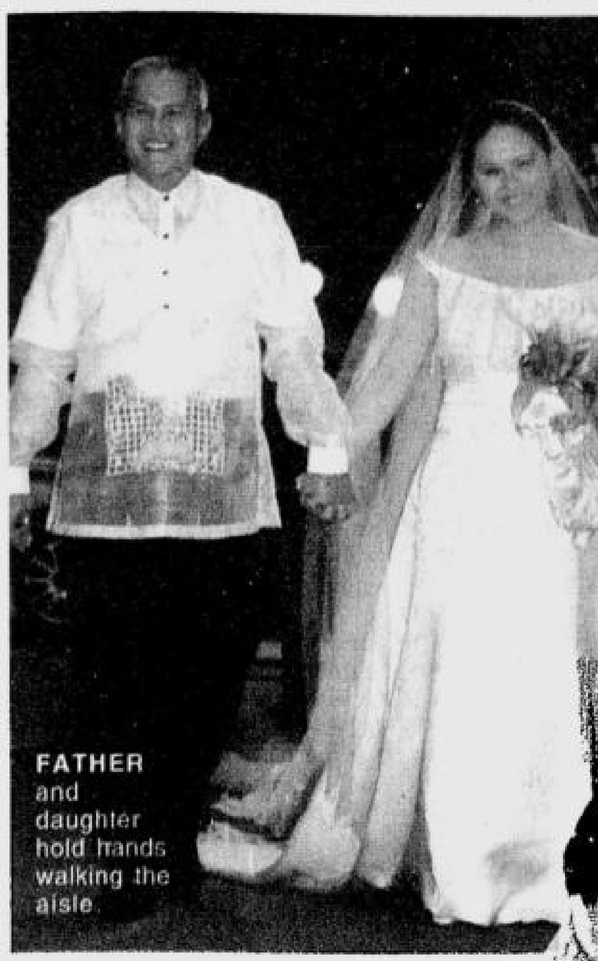

FATHER and daughter hold hands walking the aisle.

FORMER President Fidel Ramos and Ching Cruz

PENNY and Mike Tuviera

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SOON TO OPEN FESTIVAL MALL ALABANG

She socked it to 'em

(From page E1)

she again found her mark—Imelda Marcos was at the next table. "Oh no," her sister recalled the cliffhanger. "We knew that if we stopped Weewee, the more she'd be challenged." So they just held their breath—which wasn't long for soon enough, Imelda was walking by their table. Dr. Partosa grabbed her chance and told Imelda that she should have been ashamed of what she'd done to the people.

Indeed this woman has a good track record, so good luck to the bad-news-making *trapo* who'd find him—or herself in the same room. (Of course, Miriam et al are a has-been; others have taken over their slots in our Public Annoyance List.)

Perhaps given the brazenness and smugness of our elected officials, Dr. Partosa is a phenomenon waiting to happen.

We're good at attending rallies or staging a People Power, but brought face to face with our abusers, we turn into a meek people ever conscious of social graces. We are not one for confrontation. We don't confront, we *beso-beso* at cocktails. We wait until their backs are turned—or worse, when they're safely out of the country.

But then again, it's a surprise that once in a blue moon, we produce the likes of Dr. Partosa who can cross the civility line at social occasions, and speak out her vote. Can you imagine if there are many people like her around? Our *trapos* and their wives and mistresses will not be able to go malling in peace, and just might be forced to do their shopping in exile, leaving us "low lifes" (what "species" were we called?) to run the country the way it should be. Can you imagine the *trapo* mistress doing her abs in the gym to the collective count of "1-2-3 *nakaw ang pinang*-liposuction *mo*!"?

If the high-flying thieves, smugglers and kidnappers in our midst weren't allowed to lead their social existence in high glamour and civility, like they are now, we'd be ruining their (stolen) lifestyles. And spoiling their lifestyles just might leave some hope for our damaged culture. Then perhaps we'd be seeing the exodus of this unwanted species, instead of the resurgent migration to the US and Canada of young talented professionals and the productive middle-class, which we are seeing now.

Given how our patience is being tried, the uncivil tribe of Dr. Partosa may just increase. About time.

Butterflies in a wedding

I'VE seen all sorts of wedding setting, but this was the first time I saw one filled with butterflies. Not in the stomachs of the betrothed couple but out fluttering in the ballroom, in the gossamer canopy at the reception entrance, or caged in the table centerpiece.

Metro magazine writer **Penny Daza** and **Mike Tuviera** had this beautiful idea to let beautiful butterflies loose in their wedding. The young couple was inspired by an American legend that butterflies signify the granting of a wish. In the young couple's case, it was a wish for happiness and bliss.

Penny and Mike got married on July 7 at St. James Church in Ayala Alabang in a setting that was most creative, if not dramatic. Thank their background for that. The pair loves books and films. Penny's the youngest of media celeb **Jullie Yap** and **Tito Daza**; Mike's the son of **Tony** and **Madeleine**, whose outfit produces "Eat Bulaga."

Combine Mike's love of filmmaking (he's entering New York University to study just that) with the logistics of the family's production outfit, and you have a sustained sense of drama—from the day he proposed to her in Subic to the time they made their vows. Under the trees in Subic, Mike went down on his knees and asked Penny to marry him, the words "Will you marry me?" scrawled with flowers on the ground. These trees were embossed on their wedding invitation.

At the reception at the Alabang Country Club, the cast reenacted the scene, in the trademark "Eat Bulaga" hilarious style.

Regine Velasquez led the entertainment at the reception.

It was the first time I saw Penny in a skirt—a gown with a long train at that, designed by **Michele Sison**. It was also the first time I saw a mother of the bride wear a suit. Jullie was in a dainty softly tailored off-white suit by **Mike de la Rosa,** with only a brush of glitter on her shirt. Jullie was so happy but we didn't see her cry. "How could I, when she (Penny) is so happy?" Jullie was telling her close friends **Josie Pasricha, Cristina Pantoja Hidalgo, Ester Barbin, Tito** and **Maryann Salcedo**.

It was the bride's sister, **Pat-P Daza Planas**, who cried buckets as she toasted the newlyweds, and it wasn't postnatal depression (Pat-P just gave birth to **Gabbie**, short for Gabrielle, not for Gabby, her boss' name); she was just so touched that her baby sister, ever independent that she had been, was now really at the threshold of a new life.

It was a power list of sponsors—**Fidel Ramos, Fred Lim, Emilio Yap, Lucio Tan, Tito Sotto, Virgie Ramos, Ching Cruz, Sharon Cuneta,** among them. Of course, **Vic Sotto, Tirso Cruz, Gina Alajar** were in the lineup. All choices of the couple themselves.

In a few months, we'll be losing our young feisty, versatile writer, as she joins her husband in his studies. A butterfly with the world as her cocoon.

E-mail the author at tsanjuan@link.com.ph

THE YOUNG couple with Penny's parents, Jullie Yap and Tito Daza

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